REASON.

AN

ESSAY.

BY

Sir *George Mackenzie.*

8°. H. 92 Linc.

LONDON,

Printed for *Jacob Tonson* at the *Judges Head* in *Chancery-lane* near *Fleetstreet.* 1690.

For the Honourable

ROBERT BOYL, Esquire.

I Know nothing (Sir) more inconsistent with right Reason, or which deserves more to be Reform'd amongst Learned men, than their way of Dedicating Books: And that we may the better understand what ought to be done in this Age, let us look back into what was done by the Antients.

The Poets did indeed invoke their Gods or the Muses in the beginning of their Works, but that was rather to obtain their assistance, than to bestow upon them Panegyricks; but their praising the Gods was a safe Subject in which they could not exceed: And therefore, though these Invocations were the first occasion of writing Dedications to Mortals, yet Flattery in this made them mistake their Model so far, that at last some of the Poets did likewise invoke the Assistance of their

Emperours, as if they had been Gods as well as Patrons.

Others of the Poets did very antiently Dedicate their Works to Men also, as Hesiod *who was older than* Homer, *dedicates or rather addresses his first Poem to* Perses; *but 'tis very observable, that he and others in such like Addresses, rather excite the Persons to whom they address to Vertue and Glory, than magnify them for having attain'd to the perfection of either or both. Yet some of these Poets have left us Dedications so excellent, that they are as little to be imitated as censur'd, such as:*

Hor. Epist. 1. Lib. 2.

Cum tot sustineas & tanta Negocia solus:
Res Italas Armis tuteris: moribus ornes:
Legibus emendes: in publica Commoda peccem,
Si longo Sermone morer tua tempora, Cæsar.

And others of them, such as Virgil, *end their Poems with very decent and delicate Complements, as that which closes the* 4th *Book of his* Georgicks,

Hæc super arvorum cultu pecorumq; canebam,
Et super arboribus: Cæsar dum magnus ad altum
Fulminat Euphratem bello, Victorq; volentes
Per populos dat Jura, viamq; affectat Olympo.

which

which exceed, in my humble Opinion, the fam'd and large Dedications of Grotius *and* Causabon.

It was usual amongst the modest Antients, to address their Books to such as they thought able to correct them, seeking rather Advice than Patronage: And thus Plutarch *tells us in the Life of* Lucullus, *That* Scylla *having wrote an History, sent it to* Lucullus *to be corrected; and* περιφώνησιν *the* Greek *word used there, seems to me to import only* adlocutio. *And I think that the Antients have found Protection and Patronage even in those Addresses wherein Advice was sought for; who durst have censur'd, as* Tully *observes, what* Brutus *or* Pomponius Atticus *approved?*

Some also prefixt modest Prefaces, wherein they acknowledged the Favours done them, and told the occasion of their Writing, as Vitruvius *to* Augustus; *others did thereafter in imitation of the Writers of* Tragedies *and* Comedies, *address themselves in a Prologue, as* Valerius Maximus *to*

Tiberius; *and this I think he did, to give his Fancy ſcope, as a Poet, to praiſe with the Latitude that Poets take; for that is the firſt Debauch I find committed of this kind, for he could not have ſaid greater things to a worſe Man.*

To ſhun which Exceſs, ſome gave to their Books the Names of the Muſes, as Herodotus; *or of men of great Merit, as* Plato *did in his* Socrates, *or* Tully *in* Lælius, *&c. or elſe omitted all Addreſſes, as* Thucidides, Livy, Saluſt, *or at moſt extended not their Addreſſes beyond a mere Compellation, ſuch as that in St.* Luke *to* Theophilus, *by which poſſibly may be meant any Chriſtian under this appellative Name, rather than a particular Patron or Friend, as ſome Books are now addreſſed to the Chriſtian Reader, in imitation it may be of him; for 'tis obſervable that the Church-men imitated this* Κράτιστε Θεόφιλε, *of St.* Luke, *and thus* Origen *dedicates his Book againſt* Celſus, *with this Compellation,* φιλάνθρωπε Ἀμβρόσιε: *And* Euſebius *names*

his

his Patron Θεόδοτε φίλε Θεῦ.

At last the word Dedication was brought in by Flattery, and Books were dedicated to Men in imitation of their dedicating Temples, Statues, and other things to the Gods; nor did this extravagant way of excessive praising ever appear till the World was under Tiberius *corrupted in all its Morals. This depraved Custom was also much heightned by the Panegyricks made by* Pliny *to* Trajan, *and by* Eusebius *to the Great* Constantine, *who thought that they might more justly praise the good than others might impious Emperours, tho' I am afraid the Eloquence which charms us in those two Discourses, shall never be able to account for the ill Example they have given.*

My design in all this is to shew, That we can as little justify our Flattery by the Practice of the Antients as by the Principles of Reason, by which they always regulated their Eloquence; And therefore it seems to me, that Dedications should be brought back to the antient Model, either of a naked Compellation

pellation which ſatisfies abundantly Friendſhip, or of acknowledging Favours which ſatisfies gratitude, or of exciting the perſons to whom we write, to deſerve thoſe praiſes which are now moſt unjuſtly beſtow'd upon them, which is a Chriſtian Duty. And I cannot but obſerve three very ill Conſequences which ariſe naturally and neceſſarily from our late Dedications; the firſt is, That they learn men to lye and flatter, and Cuſtom hath almoſt legitimated this Crime, and made it a Duty. Secondly, They have poiſon'd the very Fountains of Truth ſo far, that Poſterity can hardly diſtingniſh betwixt thoſe who have deſerv'd well or ill, Flattery thinking always fit to ſupply by its exceſſive praiſes, what is wanting in due merit; and therefore by how much their Patrons deſerve ill, they praiſe ſo much the more, and the only mark of Vertue in an Author or Merit in a Patron now is, that there is no extraordinary thing ſaid in any Addreſs to the one by the other; for who can believe an Author ſpeaks truth

in

in his Book, who lyes and flatters in its very beginning; or that a Patron has any modesty or common sense, who suffers himself to be so imposed upon? If the Patron believe what the Author says, he must be a fool; and if he believes him not, he must think the Author one; and since they who lye improbably, are thought fools in all things else, why not in this too, in which they exceed the most Romantick Travellers, for they only would impose on us in things which we know not, but these in things wherein we cannot but discover them? and I wonder why they do not as well praise the French *King for having found out* America, *or for having vanquisht* Alexander *the Great, as for those things which they of late ascribe to him in their Dedications. Thirdly, Our late Dedications have really corrupted the Eloquence of the Age; for whereas the true Ornaments of Eloquence are to be natural and decent in expressing our Thoughts, these Dedications have blown our style into a Tympany, and have ruined it's natu-*

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ral Beauty by fulsome and ill placed daubing Paints: Which made Chrysippus, *as* Laertius *tells us, decry all Dedications to Kings and Princes, lest they should entice men to Flattery; but this were to run from one Excess to another.*

δοκεῖ δὲ ὑπερόπτης τὶς γεγονέναι τοσαῦτα γοῦν βιβλία γράψας, οὐδενὶ τῶν βασιλέων προσεφώνησε.

I Design, Sir, nothing in this Essay, but to hold out a Lanthorn to those who are ready to split on a Rock; and I wish rather that this may be one of the Works that may follow me, *than one of those that may bring me Reputation: And I send this to you as* Lucullus *did to* Scylla *for Correction; or as* Cicero *did to* Atticus, *as a token of our Friendship, and of my just esteem of your Piety and Learning.*

G. M.

PART I.

How weakly Men reaſon in matters of greateſt Importance.

IT may ſeem a bold Undertaking in any man to owne right Reaſon in this Age, it being the declared Enemy of our intereſts and inclinations, for it may poſſibly excite man to reflect upon what the World and himſelf does, and ſo inſpire him with thoughts contrary to thoſe which are generally received, and that is the only unpardonable Errour. It may likewiſe ſeem ridiculous to think, that there is any common Standard of Reaſon a-

mongſt men, ſince that charms in one Country, which is abhorred in others, and the very imaginary lines which divide Kingdoms, ſeem likewiſe to divide their way of thinking, and to make a different Geography in the Reaſon which they adore, as well as in the Earth on which they trample; every Age of the World has almoſt had a different way of reaſoning, and every Age in Man ſuggeſts to him contrary thoughts, in the preſent he condemns what himſelf formerly admir'd: So little influence has it upon the beſt refin'd Judicatures and Aſſemblies, that the moſt infallible Churchmen, the moſt learned Judges, and the moſt zealous Patriots muſt truſt to Voting, becauſe they cannot to Reaſoning, and they are by this likewiſe ſo often miſled, that it may be expected men will one day agree to decide matters by the feweſt Votes, as the wiſer

have

have always told us, that Votes are rather to be weighed, than numbred. It has often grieved me, that men could gueſs the deciſion and determination of any point to be debated, before they heard the Reaſons to be produced upon either ſide, and to hear them laugh at ſuch as truſted to the ſolidity of the Reaſons they were to produce, being fully convinced that the point would be determined by Intereſt, and not by Reaſon. The *Inka* of *Peru* was much in the right, when he regreted, that his Predeceſſors had not obliged him to worſhip a reaſonable Man; yet his choice in this had been unſucceſsful; for it would have been as hard to have found him, except he had believed his Prieſt, who had undoubtedly told him he was the man. And tho' I believe not that French Phyſician who aſſures us, he found in his Travels a Nation that differed al-

together from us in our way of reaſoning, as if God deſign'd to ſhew Mankind that his Omnipotency is not tyed in this to any known meaſures; yet I ſee, even amongſt our ſelves, that Conveniency (the gentler name of Avarice) Pride, Revenge, Bigotry, Education, and every thing elſe paſs for Reaſon, except Reaſon it ſelf, which makes me oft-times cry out, *Is this that noble Creature formed after the Image of God, for whom Chriſt dyed, and who is to be Co-heir with him of his everlaſting Kingdoms.* All which notwithſtanding it is undeniably true, that there is ſomething in man more ſublime than can be aſcribed to fleſh and blood, that dull matter could never inſpire him with theſe penetrating, ſubtil, comprehenſive, generous, and elevated thoughts, which made the Pagans believe, that his Soul was *particula Divinæ Naturæ*, a parcel of that ſame Di-

vine Subſtance of which the Gods were formed, and that men ſo qualified were demi-Gods, and God Almighty himſelf has by a ſurer Revelation revealed to us, that this Noble Soul was formed after his Image, and it was moſt conſequential that God who is infinite, being to communicate himſelf to ſome of his Creatures, to the end his Greatneſs and Goodneſs might be known to them, he ſhould in order to this breathe into them ſomewhat that might comprehend, at leaſt, ſome Ideas of that infinite Perfection; and therefore it was neceſſary that the Soul ſhould be an image of what was infinite, and that we might underſtand this from ſome exteriour and ſenſible repreſentations and things, he has formed his very body (the Casket wherein that Noble Jewel is kept) after a very wonderful manner, thus by ſmall and interceptible Rays darted in-

to his Eye, the repreſentations of the vaſt Hemiſphere, are imprinted ſo on that little Tablet, that it ſeems as great and diſtinct there, as in the Original; all he ever heard is laid up in his memory, as diſtinctly as Papers in a Cabinet. And almoſt by the ſame motion of the Tongue; or at leaſt, without any ſtudied variation, vaſt numbers of delicate words, or harmonious ſounds, do, in a way unknown, and unperceptible by Fleſh and Blood, ſally out in mighty Swarms and Armies, which paſſing thus undiſcovered, through the Air, enter at many thouſand Ears in the ſame Figure, Ranks, and Files, wherein they were at firſt ſpoke; and there, in a ſpiritual way, they charm ſome, and enrage others; they animate ſome, and diſcourage others; working almoſt as great varieties as they bring.

Divine Wiſdom alſo foreſeeing that Intereſt would perſwade men to pull all to pieces, whilſt each drew all to himſelf, he impreſt upon this Soul common Principles, which even thoſe muſt reverence who neglect them, and therefore they err, not in the rule, but in the application, and cheat themſelves by Subterfuges, the recurring to which infers neceſſarily, that theſe Principles are ſubmitted to by the moſt ſtubborn, and ſomewhat reſpected by the wildeſt in ſublunary matters; and yet in what concerns our immortal Souls, and eternal ſtate, we are more negligent, as will appear too clearly by theſe following Particulars which I have claſſed according to their different inferences.

I have oft-times admir'd to ſee men buſied about nothing, ſave external and ſenſual Objects; but it is yet ſtranger to find, that amongſt ſuch as are convinc'd, that

Knowledge is as much to be preferr'd to all other things, as the Soul is to the Body ; there are yet ſome ſo ſenſual, even in this point, that the knowledge they ſeek after is but a meer delicate ſenſuality. Mathematicians conſider chiefly how to meaſure Bodies, Phyſicians how to know and cure men, as Souldiers do how to deſtroy them. But the ſtudy of Chriſtian Morality (which has for its Object the Soul of Man heightned by the Chriſtian Religion, teaching him how to underſtand the duty of that Soul to God) is too much neglected, as a thing obvious and eaſie : Whereas when our Saviour came into the World, he neither taught Mathematicks, Medicine, nor Phyſiology, tho' all theſe were much conſidered in that Age wherein he aſſum'd our Nature ; and he could have made himſelf as much admir'd by clearing myſterious doubts

doubts in theſe, as by working Miracles; but he paſſing by all theſe as leſs uſeful Notions, and ſuch as too frequently divert and diſtract, rather than inform; he declares he was come to make Man happy, and begins his Miniſtry by an admirable Sermon on the Mount, whereby, in order to the making him happy, he teaches him to reaſon rightly upon his duty to God and Men: and it is ſtrange, that we ſhould think dull matter is able to afford more noble Contemplations, than that ſubtle, that ſublime, that vaſt, and that nimble Soul, which retains ſo far the Image of its Maker, as to be inſcrutable in all its faculties: and Oh what wonderful Springs and Motions, what various windings and flights, what boundleſs and new Spheres and Worlds are there in his Reflections, and what things are daily ſaid, and Volumes written on the

Love

Love to Women, which is but the excurſion of one of them. Our diſeaſes cannot conceal themſelves being tyed to matter, but the diſeaſes of our immortal Souls are ſo concealed by Self-love, which loves to cover its own imperfections, and to hide its own retreats, that they are paſt finding out; and if a little Microſcope can diſcover to the Eye new and ſtrange things in Objects that have been daily ſeen, without being conſidered for many Ages; what wonderful diſcoveries may ſerious thinking men make in ſo immenſe an Object that has been ſo much neglected? eſpecially ſince the thoughts of Man do change and vary themſelves into as many ſhapes, and give themſelves as many colours as they pleaſe: and every Duty or Errour is really a different Object as they are in conjunction with, or in oppoſition to one another; whereas all other

Objects

Objects are incapable of ſuch Variations either from themſelves or others: And tho' God has deſign'd to be known in his Works, yet he ſeems on purpoſe to have made the knowledge of them ſo unſearchable to Natural Philoſophers, and the ſucceſs ſo little able to reward or honour their Endeavours, to the end they might the more reliſh Moral Philoſophy, which is then only uncertain when like the other it grows more a Science than a Duty.

In my reaſoning I will uſe the Forms preſcrib'd by God himſelf in his holy Scriptures; wherein when he would convince man of his Folly, Sin, or Ingratitude, he argues with him from his own conceſſions, in theſe caſes, or his own practice, on all other occaſions: As for inſtance, when he ſends *Nathan* to *David*, he asks him what the Man deſerv'd, who having great Herds and Flocks

of

of his own, took a poor Man's Lamb out of his Boſom? And *David*, having in great anger ſworn that he ſhould die, *Nathan* then tells him, it was his caſe, and condemns him from his own mouth: And God ſays to his People, who acknowledg'd him to be their Lord and Father, but walk'd not ſuitably to their acknowledgment. *If I be a Father, where is mine Honour, and if I be a Maſter, where is my Fear?* Malach. 1. 6. He calls to them, *Iſai.* 1. 18. *Come, let us reaſon together*; and admiring the unreaſonableneſs of unthinking Man, he appeals to the Heavens and Earth, *Hear, O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth, for the Lord hath ſpoken! I have nouriſhed and brought up Children, and they have rebelled againſt me! The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Aſs his Maſter's Crib: But* Iſrael *doth not know, my People do*

do not conſider! And in the ſeveral Goſpels, we find our bleſſed Saviour, after the ſame manner, confuting the *Jews*, and convincing all his Hearers. Nor do I find ſo much delicate reaſoning in any of thoſe Books, highly eſteem'd by our Men of Senſe, who ſlight too much that admirable one, which God himſelf owns as his ſacred Word: And I admire our Saviour, as much for his Reaſonings as for his Miracles. Thus when he would convince Men of the folly of careing immoderately for the things of this World, he asks them, What profit ſhall it be to gain all the World, that ſoon periſhes, if they loſe their own Soul, which is Immortal? *And which of you,* (ſays our Lord) *by taking thought, can add one cubit to his ſtature?* And urges them, not to fear want, becauſe, if they who are ſinful know how to provide for

for their own Families, how much more ſhall your Father, which is in Heaven, know how to provide for you, if ye be his Children? *Behold*, (ſays our bleſſed Maker) *the Fowls of the air, for they ſow not, neither do they reap, yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them; are not you much better than they?*

For eſtabliſhing this my Poſition, it is fit to conſider, that ſuch as are reaſonable, endeavour to ſhew it in the greateſt concerns; and it implies a want, or weakneſs of Reaſon, to be exact and delicate in inconſiderable and ſilly things, and yet to err and be careleſs in matters of greateſt conſequence: And who would not laugh at an Ambaſſadour or a General, who would value himſelf upon his Dancing or Playing upon the Lute, beſtowing upon theſe Exerciſes the time due to his King, Country,

and

and Negotiations; which makes me admire, why in this fooliſh Age, we call theſe Men of good Senſes, and ſtrong Spirits, who can criticiſe *Virgil*, *Juvenal*, *Livie*, *Tacitus*, or it may be, underſtand the Mathematicks, or Converſation; whil'ſt we are convinc'd, that albeit they believe there is a God, yet they mind him not, and care leſs for their Souls than they do for any of their ordinary recreations, tho' they are forc'd to tremble at its ill condition, when they begin to conſider it.

One of the things which prompted me to write this Book, was the reading of a *French* Treatiſe, *De la Juſteſſe*, wherein, tho' he made me expect great matters, by promiſing to learn us to think juſtly; yet it only taught how to chuſe true Epithets, or underſtand Criticiſms, and ſuch trivial knacks: But,

alas,

alas, it is more to be regreted, that Men ſhould have the ſenſe to laugh at others, for not having conſidered the Plot and deſign of their Plays; whil'ſt many who paſs for refin'd Wits, want one in their whole life; and where the want of it is not only a greater ſhame, but is of greater danger, ſince a Man cannot err here without being ruined to all eternity: And one of theſe great Wits, without a ſolid deſign in his life, appears to me, like a glorious, firſt-rate Ship, magnificently equipp'd, richly gilded, and abundantly provided of all neceſſaries; but becauſe it wants a Rudder, and a skilful Pilot, fluctuating in a great Storm, and near a dangerous Shore, on which it is driven with violence, threaten'd by the Wind, and overflown by the Billows; ſometimes ſhatter'd by one Rock, and ſometimes by another,

nother, till at laſt it ſinks down irrecoverably into an unfathomable and dreadful Abyſs. Whether then is the Owner of this Ship, who looks on unconcernedly, and perhaps, would not leave his Whore, Game, or Supper; or that Poet, who wrote his Play without a Plot, moſt to be contemn'd? Yet he who has no deſign to ſave his immortal Soul from endleſs torments, is a much greater Fool than either; which recommends to me the ſenſe of a Wiſer, tho' a Heathen Poet, on this ſubject, and which I wiſh the whole Tribe would ſeriouſly conſider.

Diſcite, ô miſeri, & cauſas cognoſcite rerum,
Quid ſumus, & quidnam victuri gignimur, ordo.
Quis datus, aut metæ quam mollis flexus & unde.
Quis modus argento, quid fas optare, quid aſper.
Utile nummus habet: patriæ carique propinqui
Quantum elargiri deceat: quem te Deus eſſe
Juſſit & humana qua parte locatus es in re.

It is a pleaſant thing to hear us

us admire Men, for conſidering exactly the Anatomy, Specialities, and Natures of Fiſhes, Fowls, Flies, and other Inſects; and yet never conſider whence themſelves came, whither they are going, or what is their duty whilſt they remain here. And I wonder why we ſhould think it juſt, to look upon Men in *Bedlam*, tho' they be very reaſonable in many things, if they be very diſtracted in any one; as I know one, who ſeem'd a diſcreet Perſon, and could converſe moſt pertinently in every thing, till they ſpoke of the Moon; but upon hearing that nam'd, fell inſtantly a ſtaring, and into great extravagancies, believing himſelf to be Secretary to the Moon: And others will be diſcreet enough, till you mention the name of ſuch a Man or Woman; and yet we do not conclude ſuch mad and diſtracted, who,

who, tho' they underſtand to meaſure Heaven, never deſign to enter into it; and who can eloquently convince Men of eternal Torments, and fright them from the wicked courſe which lead to theſe, and yet ruine themſelves on the precipices againſt which they guard others. And who would not think a Phyſician mad, for all his skill, if after he had made a learned diſcourſe, to prove a liquor to be Poiſon, he ſhould drink it off himſelf; and yet more, if he would not take an Antidote, tho' ready, and which he knew would ſecure him.

I ſhall but lightly touch that ridiculous and impudent extravagance of ſome, who, rather pretending to reaſon, than having it, take pains to perſwade themſelves and others, that there is not a God, whilſt even the ſubtilty which they uſe, when they are endea-

endeavouring to prove this their Aſſertion, does neceſſarily prove his Being: It being impoſſible, that Matter and Chance, (their great Idols) could forge and poliſh ſuch ſubtile notions: And how can they imagine, that ſince their own little Affairs could not be managed without foreſight and conduct, that yet this Great and Glorious Univerſe, which comprehends ſo many Millions, ſuch as they, ſhould be ſo exactly and juſtly governed, by blind Chance? If there were no Men but the ſillie and humorous Aſſerters of this Opinion, I ſhould be aſham'd to bring Man as an inſtance of the Power and Wiſdom of God: Let us then conſider this Creature, form'd of I know not what, fed, breathing, and growing in the Womb, we know not how; but from thoſe deſpicable beginnings, one riſes in a ſhort time, to meaſure the Heavens,

Heavens, to calculate their Motions, and to imitate their Lightning and Thunder; another does for his own Glory, form ſuch Models of Religion as ſeduces, and draws after him Millions of Men, contrary to their former Intereſts, as well as former Inclinations: A Third, by his Skill, Conduct, and Courage, makes even the remoteſt Countries of the World to tremble, overturning, and confounding that World, whereof he is ſo ſmall a part: And a Fourth, by drawing ſweetly, and gently together very diſtant and different reflections, and thoughts, which come readily, as it were, upon his call, from their ſeveral repoſitories, forms an Harangue, or a Poem, which pleaſes or torments the hearers irreſiſtably, as they have commiſſion from their Author; it being harder to reſiſt them than to make them: Can

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ſo regular things be aſcrib'd to wild Chance, or ſuch ſubtile things to dull Matter, which by its Nature, moves neceſſarily and without choice? The beſt contriv'd Machine can only repeat; but Man chuſes his own thoughts, and varies or changes them as he pleaſes.

I deſire our Wits to conſider, that every thing which they ſee, or know, is ſo marvellouſly fitted to ſome uſe, that as they could not be wanted, ſo they cannot be contrived better: And it is ridiculous to anſwer with *Epicurus*, (who, tho' he denied Providence, yet denied not a Deity) that theſe things were not made for theſe uſes, as we pretend, but were, in proceſs of time, made uſe of to theſe ends by Wit or Neceſſity: For even Bruits do immediately after they are brought forth, run to thoſe things which they need, with

with greater exactneſs than Man could teach them; and how could Men, by Reaſon, make every thing uſeful, if ſo infinite a Being did not direct and ſuperviſe their almoſt infinitely various Neceſſities and Deſigns, and inſtruct them, by the uſe of Thinking, (that wonderful Engine) to accommodate every thing to its true uſe. The next thing I recommend to them, is to conſider that all the Principles of Juſtice and Government, without which, the World could not ſubſiſt, depend upon the belief of this infinite Being; for how could I convince a Man without this, that it were not fit to poyſon his Brother for an Eſtate; or his Prince, when he thought that by that he might ſtep into his Throne; which oft-times might be done covertly enough, to eſcape the puniſhment of Laws, if they could that of Conſcience: Nor is it of any force

to tell us, that Politicians have only invented this for their own conveniency, ſince even this anſwer preſuppoſes that there was a pre-diſpoſition on the Spirits of Men, to receive and ſubmit to this impreſſion, which is an unanſwerable proof of its truth; and this trick had not been long believ'd, had it been only ſuch; nor could their inventions ſecure us againſt private Treachery, tho' it could againſt open Force; nor can I omit to obſerve from this anſwer, how unfit theſe Men would be to govern others, and how unſufferable they are under all Governments; who thus expoſe to contempt that which they confeſs to be the great Engine of Government. I might likewiſe urge the conſent of all Nations, which, by how much they became the more poliſh'd and civiliz'd, do ſo much the more reſt on this belief. The certainty that

has ariſen from Predictions which are above Nature, and the wonderful Effects wrought by Miracles, even againſt it, are confirm'd to us, by the unerring teſtimony of thoſe Senſes, which our Atheiſts make the only and ſure teſt of Knowledge. And do not we perceive, that that light of Reaſon, which by conſtant and penetrating reflections, in time, diſcover'd, overcame, and baffled every Cheat and Errour; has notwithſtanding, more fully fix'd, aſcertain'd, and clear'd the Being of a God, whoſe Power affords us ſuch Protection; and whoſe Providence affords us ſuch beautiful and pleaſant Contemplations, that to love that life, without believing his Being, is to be without that Senſe and Wit which theſe wild Scepticks pretend to; who, whil'ſt they ſhun to be miſerable, make themſelves ſo, and whil'ſt they pretend to paſs for

Wits, demonſtrate themſelves to be Fools, and Brutiſh. I purpoſely avoid the proof of this by Metaphyſical Arguments, becauſe God's own way of proving it, is, by deſiring us to conſider the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and the other Objects which are obvious to all Men; for it was fit, that what was to be univerſally believ'd, ſhould be inferr'd from what was univerſally ſeen: And ſuch as underſtand not thoſe Metaphyſical Notions, are apt to believe that there is a deſign to impoſe upon them.

But ſince our curioſity muſt be always ſomewhat ſatisfied with Arguments raiſed above Senſe, I ſhall offer this one: It cannot be deny'd, but that there is ſomething in Man that can compare two or more different things, ſuch as, Whether the pain of the Head or the Leg be greateſt? And

And that this cannot be done by any thing that is material, is very clear; for if ſo, it muſt be done by ſomething that touches at once both the things to be compared, and no material thing can do that in the ſame points; and if it be in different points, then it cannot judge of the difference betwixt the two; for they muſt be touched in one common point, elſe there can be no application of the material Judge, to both, at the ſame time: And if this judgment muſt be made by ſomething in Man that is immaterial, and ſo is able to extend its indiviſible ſelf to both the things to be compared; then it neceſſarily follows, that this muſt be a Spirit; for there can be nothing immaterial bur a Spirit; and if we can once comprehend a Spirit, we can never deny there is a God: For the hardeſt things

that

that are objected againſt his Being, are thoſe which ſtrike againſt the Being of Spirits in general.

Becauſe few or none are really diſtracted by this kind of Madneſs, tho' they could wiſh they were, by ſmothering their Reaſon with Illuſions, that they may cover their Crimes to themſelves, with the hopes of Impunity, I haſten to another kind of unreaſonable Men, who, tho' they acknowledge there is a God, do yet, by a deplorable negligence, little mind how to pleaſe and obey him. And that I may enforce upon my Reader, the weakneſs of their Reaſonings, I wiſh any of us would think, that if a Society of Men were Shipwrack'd upon, or ſent Priſoners to an unknown Iſle, were it not moſt unreaſonable for them, to ſit Reading, Diſcourſing, or Gam-

Gaming, and not to think who were Maſters of that Iſle, and how they might live in it; and if they learn'd that it belong'd to a great Prince, who had abſolute power of Life and Death, were it not unreaſonable, not to deſire to obtain his friendſhip? But much more to reject it, if he offer'd it with Riches and Preferment, upon no other condition, ſave that they would attend at his Court, love him, and not wrong one another? But this is our condition in a much ſtronger caſe; for we are here in a World created by God Almighty, in which he can kill and preſerve, not the Body only, but the Soul too; nor for ſome time only, but for ever; nor requires he any harder condition of us, than that we would love the Lord our God with all our Hearts, and our Neighbours as our ſelves; which are ſo far from being hard

Leſſons, that one would think we could not but take great delight in them, if they were not preſcrib'd to us as our Duty: For if a Man be admir'd once for his great Courage, Conduct, or Learning, who would not be pleas'd with being allow'd to converſe with him? Who amongſt us would not have taken pains to have been lov'd by *Cæſar*, as his Friend, but more, as his Son? But if *Cæſar* had been as expert a Mathematician as he was a Souldier, and could have burnt his Enemies Ships, like *Archimedes*; if he had invented Gun-powder for his Magazins, and found out the whole new World, as well as conquer'd a conſiderable part of the old: How much more would we yet have eſteem'd him? And to proceed further, if this *Cæſar* could either have ſav'd his own life, by knowing the ſecrets of, or by killing alone

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all his Aſſaſſinates, or prolong'd for many hundreds of years that of his Servants; we ſhould yet more have rejoyced in his Service and Adoption: But what is all this to the Infinite Perfection of the Great King of Kings, whoſe Servants, Friends, nay, and adopted Sons we may be? He it is who govern'd *Cæſar*, as he does the Flies or Ants, who, with one word made *Cæſar*, and all the Wrld, whereof he conq uer'd only a part, which he was not able to retain. By whoſe skill, the Heavens were ſtretched out, in which, vain *Cæſar*'s greateſt Ambition was to be a little Star: Who not only knows, but in one moment, governs all the various, and almoſt infinite thoughts and deſigns of Angels, Men, and Devils; and who forces them all, how contrary ſoever to one another, to agree in the

great deſigns he has in governing the World.

Who would not rejoyce to ſerve a Maſter, that knew when he were innocent, and who, as he is exactly juſt to his Servants, ſo could not be impos'd upon by others, to their prejudice; and tho' even ſwarms of Witneſſes combined againſt them, could ſee through the Miſts that they threw up, which no Earthly Maſter, how juſt ſoever, can do? But ſuch is our Heavenly Maſter, who can alſo not only enrich us when we are poor, and cure us when we are ſick; but can tame our Paſſions, illuminate our Ignorance, ſtrengthen our Inclinations, ſweeten our Tempers, and make all theſe Joys compleat, by the removal of all Fears or Jealouſies that can end or leſſen them. Can we give any reaſonable account, why we ſhould

ſhould be careful to keep the Road exactly, if we knew there were great Precipices on every hand, into which whoever fell, were irrecoverable; and yet knowing, that in our voyage to Eternity, there are Precipices that lead to dreadful Pits of Fire and Brimſtone, kindled by the wrath of an angry God: We notwithſtanding, go on careleſly, laughing at ſuch as admoniſh us, and minding little trifles, which we are convinc'd will pleaſe no longer than we poſſeſs them.

How falſly do we reaſon, in reflecting on our ſelves and others? For we think them mad who endeavour not to get themſelves cur'd, when they find they are tormented with Gout and Gravel; yet who amongſt us is at any pains, ſo much as to ſeek remedies for his Paſſions and Vices, which of all other Diſeaſes torment

torment us moſt: And if we heard a Fellow in Livery, value himſelf upon the Richneſs of his Suit, would we not eſteem him an airy and fooliſh Creature? But if we ſaw a Man who were condemned, and going to the Scaffold, admire himſelf, and talk of his Power and Glory, would we not conclude him diſtracted? And yet this is the true State of a Vain and Glorious Monarch, who has nothing but what he has receiv'd from an Infinite God, who can recal it when he pleaſes; and who, whil'ſt he talks of his Glory and Greatneſs, is by that God condemn'd to die, as irredeemably, as muſt the meaneſt Slave, over whom he inſults. And ſince we would laugh at a vain Coxcomb, who whilſt he were entertaining his friends in his Maſter's houſe, as if it were his own, were taken out of it by the ears, and forc'd to tremble under the

laſh;

laſh; how ridiculous muſt we conclude *Belſhazzar* (and which is the caſe of too many other great Men) who whilſt he was feaſting all his Nobles, and perſwading them of His independance, was ſeized by an irreſiſtable horrour which ſhak'd him all to pieces.

I doubt not for all this but Learned men will think they may juſtly value themſelves on their own great Parts and Skill; and you may read long Lectures made by them on this Subject; but how unreaſonable are they in this, ſince theſe Endowments are given them as external things are given to others; and a School-Boy may more juſtly admire himſelf, becauſe he can repeat excellent lines made by another: or a man, becauſe the borrowed Furniture, that he would make us believe to be his own, were within, and not without doors, or were finer than

that

that borrowed ſtuff which another had, whom he deſpis'd. If two poor men ſhould borrow, the one ten, and the other a thouſand pounds, the difference of the borrowed Summs ſhould not ceaſe to leave both of them equally poor. But he is really a wiſe and reaſonable man, who knowing that what he has is borrow'd, endeavours not to boaſt of it as his own, but to repay as much as he can the Intereſt to the true Owner for the Loan. Let us then conclude this Period with the Apoſtle's juſt reaſoning, 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. *For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what haſt thou that thou didſt not receive? Now if thou didſt receive it, why doſt thou glory as if thou hadſt not received it?*

Being once in company with a great Wit, who ſeeing two poor Chair-men ſweat in carrying a groſs corpulent vain Fellow; he cry'd

cry'd out, that he had rather be hang'd than ſerve ſo meanly ſuch a Rogue. Whereupon I told him he was doing a meaner thing, in bearing up the Extravagancies of a violent and tyrannous Stateſman, to pleaſe whoſe extravagant humour, I had ſeen him ſweat more than theſe poor men did; who had alſo in this the advantage of him, that they did ſo to get bread for their Family, whereas he did the other to feed that Ambition and Avarice which tended to deſtroy himſelf.

Man's unreaſonableneſs appears alſo in the unſuitableneſs of the Means he uſes, to the Ends he propoſes to himſelf. Who would not think him a Fool, who would endeavour to cure a mad Dog by putting a golden Collar about his Neck? Or who would think to cure a Fever in a man by beſtowing a great Office on him? But

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are not men ſuch Fools, when they think they can quiet their Paſſions by Riches, or their Minds by advancement? Spiritual diſtempers are to be cur'd by ſpiritual means, and as the fineſt Thoughts cannot feed the body, ſo neither can the greateſt Riches, or any other external thing ſatisfie the immaterial Soul.

If I were deſirous to get Preferment, would not I endeavour to pleaſe him from whom I were to expect it, and not his Enemies? but tho' we ſay that we expect, or at leaſt wiſh to be Favourites to God Almighty, and to be by him happy for ever; yet we ſpend not our time in obeying him, but in ſerving openly and aſſiduouſly the World, the Devil, and our own Luſts, which are his declar'd Enemies; and that too ſo reſolutely, that any reaſonable man cannot upon conſidering our actions, but conclude, That either we

car'd

car'd not for what he could give, or elſe that we were ſubtle enough to cheat him, or ſtrong enough to over-power him.

If a man were going to live in another Country, would he not endeavour to accuſtom himſelf to the Cuſtoms of it, and to carry with him things that were uſeful in that Country? And would we not laugh at him, if he ſpent his time in building and adorning that Inne which he were to leave? But this is our condition, who beſtow all our thoughts on the things of this World, from which we ſhould expect to remove every moment, and in which we cannot ſtay long.

It is moſt ſtrange that men, to ſecure themſelves againſt Fortune, ſhould put themſelves more and more into its power: For the remedies we uſe are to grow richer

and

and greater, and nothing ſubjects us more to accidents than theſe do; for it is for theſe that men are purſued, and deſtroyed, and they are oftner crimes than defences.

God has promiſed, that *if we ſeek we ſhall find, if we knock it ſhall be opened*; ſo that Prayer is the true way to attain to what is deſirable; and men may pray ſecurely at their own Bed-ſide, or in walking about their own Field. But yet men will leave this ſure, ſafe, and eaſie way; and ſail to the *Indies* amidſt ſtorms, and travel through the Deſarts of *Arabia* amongſt Thieves, to get unneceſſary Riches; expoſe themſelves to Cannons, and watch in Camps to get Honours, truſting the Seas, Winds, and Cannons more than their own kind and merciful Father, who made and governs all theſe.

When

When we have Children, we are very desirous to leave them well secur'd, and consequently provide them Estates; but tho' we take pains to breed our Colts, and Hawks, we take no pains in teaching our Children their duty to their Master, as we do those Beasts; and probably by not being bred to a just way of reasoning, they may lose by one extravagance all that we have left them, or at least live unhappily in not knowing how to use it aright. And the same Parents which would bestow their Estates to free their Children from burning for a month in a Fever, will, to get them a little addition to that same state, breed them so, as may occasion their burning to all Eternity.

If any man were guilty of Crimes, and so needed the King's Pardon, would we not think him a meer Brute, if he should instead

of

of ſeeking it earneſtly and ſincerely, run up and down railing at him, and reviling his Laws? Yet moſt of our Wits, who have indeed more guilt than wit, and are not ſure what moment they ſhall be damn'd for ever, make it their buſineſs, rather than ſport, to treat in ridicule his Divine Majeſty and Laws.

Let us a little examine the unreaſonableneſs of mens arguing in matters of Honour, wherein they pretend to be ſo exact, and delicate, and we ſhall be convinc'd how weak their Reaſon is.

And in the firſt place, would not right Reaſon dictate to us, that thoſe things are fitteſt for men of Honour, which are moſt approv'd and recommended by that Judge whom all acknowledge to underſtand beſt what is great, glorious, and juſt? Who would believe any thing to be honourable for a Souldier, which *Cæſar* or Mareſhal

Turenne

Turenne had condemned as unjuſt and mean? And if this Rule hold, we muſt conclude, That it is the Almighty God, the Glorious Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of the heart of man, and not the inſolent Courtier, the huffing Hector, or the unſtable and ignorant Rabble, who muſt give the Rules to juſt Honour and true Grandeur. Nor ſhould the beſt of moral men be able to perſwade us, that any thing is honourable, but according as it agrees with the reveal'd Will of that Omnipotent and Infallible Judge; for if he be Infallible, it is ridiculous that his judgment ſhould not be acquieſc'd in; and if we think him not Infallible, we cannot think he is God.

If any man ſhould call one perjur'd, eſpecially if he were a Perſon of Quality, he would reſent it irreconcileably; and yet are not all ſuch as are guilty of Adultery

tery, guilty of Perjury? and to aggravate this Perjury, it is Perjury againſt a Lady, to injure whom, and to whom the breach of an ordinary promiſe would be thought a ſhameful Crime; but yet much more, when it is conſidered, that upon that Oath the Lady had deliver'd her ſelf up, and by the like Oath had forſaken all the reſt of Mankind: So then, if Perjury be a Villainy, when committed in the moſt trivial things, and to a perſon who never obliged us; what can it then be, when committed in the greateſt concern, and when the Oath was given in the moſt conſiderate manner, and under the greateſt obligation to the moſt deſerving perſon, and to one of that delicate Sex, which the moſt unworthy are unwilling to injure or cheat?

I doubt not, but all who pretend to Reaſon, will acknowledge, that

that Ingratitude is the moſt abominable of all Vices, and moſt inconſiſtent with true Honour. And if a Prince had obliged one of his Subjects, behaving himſelf as a kind Father to him; would he not be a very Rogue if he were ungrateful; but yet more, if he refuſed to obey him, after many Promiſes and Vows, nay, and after many Pardons, having ſeveral times relapſed again and again into thoſe Crimes, and even employed the Forces, with which the King had truſted him, againſt himſelf? And yet the King of Kings, and our Heavenly Father, having heaped hourly ſuch favours on us, that it needs a mans whole time to repeat them, becauſe every moment of our time makes a part of them, we ungrateful Miſcreants employ all the ſtrength of our Spirits and Bodies in offending him daily, to that height, that tho' we our ſelves tremble

when we think with confusion upon them, and vow against, and mourn for them; yet we reasonable men return with the Dog to the vomit, and with the Sow to the puddle; and add the breach of our new Vows to our old sins.

I know that Pride has form'd for its own defence a body of Law call'd Point of Honour; as one instance whereof, amongst others, I urge how unreasonably men repair their Honour, in endeavouring to take a man's life for a word, damning both themselves and him, and by way of Complement drawing innocent men (and such ordinarily as have the greatest Kindness for them) into the same hazard and condemnation; which in spight of all the Gallantry imaginable, does prove how little use of true Reason men have, tho' they value themselves very much, as if they were the sole Masters of it. For this is not only contrary

to

to the Law of God, the true Fountain of Honour, as of all good, but to the Laws of our Country: And what can be more abſurd, than that ſome private, young, and ranting Hectors ſhould be able to make that paſs for generous and gallant, which whole Nations aſſembled have after much reaſoning and deliberation condemned as a Crime in all Ages and Countries; and even the ſame men, who brag of this when enrag'd, and in the field, condemn it in Parliament and in cold blood? But nothing diſcredits this Heroiſm more, than that thoſe, who would not yield up their revenge to God, nor their Conſcience, have been frighted from it by the French King and the Gallows.

If one man give another the Lye, he muſt pay down his life, becauſe a Man of Honour would rather chuſe to dye than to be a Lyar, or rather thought one; but

this Man of Honour will flatter, till all Men laugh at him for lying ſo groſly; and this Eloquence of Knaves muſt likewiſe make his Patron a Fool, for being capable to believe what none believes, ſave himſelf; ſo that this Flatterer, who yet paſſes for a Man of true Honour, makes himſelf a Liar, and his Patron a Fool. How oftentimes alſo have we ſeen theſe Men of Honour lie and flatter, to promote Faction, and to pleaſe the Multitude, which they were thereby deſigning to cheat, as if the addition of a Cheat could make a Lie honourable. Rebellion and Pimping are Noble flights of Glory and Kindneſs, to which, faſhionable Men, and Men of Honour can only pretend, and a Prerogative deny'd to thoſe Men who are truly virtuous. If Men, who are tender of their Reputation, were reaſonable, would they not conſider

ſider, that all theſe their Crimes and Vices are known to that Great God, who is the Fountain of Truth, and the Rule of Purity, and ſhall at the Great Day be known to Men and Angels? If a Lady conſidered, that all her unchaſt thoughts, and a Perſon who paſſes for an Honeſt Man, that all his Secrets and Cheats would be diſcover'd to their Neighbours, though as guilty as they, it would confound them: How then will all Men look, when the Sins they are endeavouring to cover, ſhall be laid open in that Illuſtrious Aſſembly, where Innocence and Knowledge ſhall be in ſuch high perfection? How can we then be judg'd Reaſonable Creatures, when we dare do that before the Almighty God, who is of purer eyes than that he can behold iniquity, which we durſt not attempt before our own Servants, who depend on

us, and are as frail as our ſelves? And if we cannot abide the Accuſation of our own Conſcience, how ſhall we be able to hold up our Faces in ſo glorious a Judicature? And can Men be Reaſonable Creatures, and yet not mind ſo great a Concern?

Fame, that tacite acknowledgment of Immortality, even in thoſe who believe it not, is purſued ſo extravagantly, that Idolatry it ſelf is not more inexcuſable: For to gain the opinion of a brutal multitude, we ſacrifice to them our Duty, our Quiet and our Security; and what deſign can we have, or return can we expect for all this? For if we be not Immortal, what ſignifies our being eſteem'd, when we are to have no being? And why ſhould we give our ſelves real Trouble for an imaginary Good? And if we believe the Chriſtian Religion, it teaches us,

that

that either we muſt be ſav'd or damn'd; if ſav'd, Fame from Men will ſignifie nothing, when we diſcover how fooliſh we were to adore ſuch Worms; if damn'd, that which made a great part of our Crime, cannot be an alleviation of its Puniſhment. But if a Man, believing there is a God, did argue juſtly, he would value highly the being eſteem'd by that Wiſdome that cannot err, and whoſe ſuffrage will laſt to all Eternity. Men can only raiſe our Character, without being able to raiſe our Merit, but our great Maſter can really make us merit, and open the eyes of others to underſtand it, when true, which no Man can do, and his eſteem brings Rewards ſuitable to its Greatneſs; and therefore is only worthy of our pains, eſpecially if we beſtowed that pains in ſerving him, which we do in gaining Fame; we might expect

from his goodneſs what can never be valuable when obtain'd from Men, becauſe of their meanneſs; or ſecure, becauſe of their Injuſtice or Caprice. If we ſaw any of our acquaintance running up and down among mean and ignorant People, to perſwade them to praiſe and admire him, we would laugh at his folly, as well as vanity; but this is the condition of us poor blind Sinners, who are ſick and dejected, if our ſilly, blind Fellow-Mortals do not admire us, and praiſe our Actions.

I have remark'd in my own time, that ſome, by taking too much care to be eſteem'd and admir'd, have by that courſe miſs'd their aim, whil'ſt others of them, who ſhunn'd it, did meet with it, as if it had fallen on them, whil'ſt it was flying from the others; which proceeded from the unfit means theſe able and reaſonable

Men

Men took to eſtabliſh their Reputation. It is very ſtrange to hear Men value themſelves upon their Honour, and their being Men of their word in Trifles, when yet that ſame Honour cannot tie them to pay the debts they have contracted upon ſolemn Promiſes, of ſecure and ſpeedy repayment, ſtarving poor Widows and Orphans, to feed their Luſts; and adding thus, Robbery and Oppreſſion to the diſhonourable breach of Truſt. And how can we think them Men of Honour, who, when a Potent and Foreign Monarch is oppreſſing his weaker Neighbours, hazard their very lives to aſſiſt him, tho' they would rail at any of their acquaintance, that meeting a ſtrong Man fighting with a weaker, ſhould aſſiſt the ſtronger in his Oppreſſion.

The ſureſt and moſt pleaſant path to univerſal Eſteem, and

true Popularity, is to be juſt; for all Men eſteem him moſt, who ſecures moſt their private Intereſt, and protects beſt their Innocence; and all who have any notion of a Deity, believe that Juſtice is one of his chief Attributes; and that therefore, whoever is juſt, is next in Nature to Him, and the beſt Picture of Him; and to be reverenc'd and lov'd: But yet, how few trace this Path, moſt Men chuſing rather to toil and vex themſelves, in ſeeking Popular Applauſe, by living high, and in profuſe Prodigalities, which are entertain'd by Injuſtice and Oppreſſion, as if rational Men would pardon Robbers, becauſe they feaſted them upon a part of their own Spoils; or did let them ſee fine and glorious Shows, made for the honour of the giver, upon the expence of the robb'd Spectators. But when a virtuqus Perſon appears Great by

his

his Merit, and obey'd only by the charming force of his Reaſon, all Men think him deſcended from that Heaven which he ſerves, and to him they gladly pay the noble Tribute of deſerved Praiſes.

Another great Claſs of Arguments, to prove how ill Men reaſon in matters of greateſt importance, may be brought from the Contradictions we are guilty of in our Conduct. As for Inſtance, Life is the thing in the World moſt valu'd, for without it, we can enjoy nothing; and yet, ſo unreaſonable are we, that for a Complement, we will hazard it ſo far, as may be rather call'd a loſing of it. When time is going, we cry out againſt Providence, for having made it ſo ſhort, and when it is gone, we would give all the World to redeem it; and yet we are weary of it ſo far as to beſtow Money

upon any thing that will help to ſpend it; and give it away in Viſits, to ſuch, to whom we would not give any thing elſe. We would for no Money quit one Year of our Life; and yet for the ſame Money; which we ſo undervalue in the expreſs exchange, moſt Men do really give away very many of their beſt years, ſince they are ſpent in gaining Money.

We exclaim againſt Tyranny, Uſurpation and Oppreſſion, and in this we are much in the right: But why then do we admire, and cry up ſuch as have been great Oppreſſors and Uſurpers, as *Alexander*, *Cæſar*? for in this, we are not only unjuſt upon the matter, but Enemies to our ſelves; for that eſteem we put upon them who have been ſuch, invites others to make us the prey of our own Errors.

Moſt Men do admire, and prefer themſelves to all others, which

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is a great proof of our unreasonableness; but yet, even these cannot stay with themselves, and by being afraid to look into their own hearts, contradict the esteem which yet at all times they have for themselves, to an unsufferable Excess. All Men desire to prefer the best Company; and when Men prefer any Company to the being alone, they demonstrate that themselves are not the best. Most Men, when they are young, contemn Riches, and love them when they are old; and though our Wits scorn to think, or say with the vulgar, yet even these are swayed as much, and as strongly by vulgar Vices, as those who never exclaim'd against the unthinking Crowd. All Creatures stand in awe of others, according to the esteem they have of them; and tho' we admire our own Perfections, and value our selves far above our proportion,

yet

yet ſtand we not in awe to commit wickedneſs when alone, which we durſt not commit if others were preſent; and thus we are ſo unreaſonable, that we want a due reverence and eſteem for our ſelves, where we ought to have it, and have it exceſſively where we ought to want it totally.

Self-love, the falſeſt tho' the ſubtileſt of all Reaſoners, endeavours to perſwade us, that in revenge, we ſhall, by ſeeing our Enemies ruined, remain our ſelves the more excellent Creatures, our Rivals being thus depreſs'd: And this is that hid reaſon which juſtifies to us that Paſſion which is truly moſt inhumane. But what an improper Argument is this, for we are not one whit the more excellent, that another is ruined by an Accident. Another Argument brought by Revenge, is, that thus we ſhall ſecure our ſelves againſt our Enemies, and

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ſo Revenge would paſs with us under the diſguiſe of Self-defence; but becauſe this would ſeem cowardly, and be in effect, a tacite acknowledgment of Fear; we rather ſay, that in Revenge, we will teach others not to attack us. But all theſe are falſe reaſonings; for no Man ſecures his true Quiet by Revenge, for it raiſes an Enemy within, which is always preſent, and able to diſquiet: And all Men conclude themſelves obliged to deſtroy the Revengeful Man, by the ſame Argument that he purſues his Revenge; and thus a Man is tortured by it till it be ſatisfied, and frighted by it after he has prevail'd.

Moſt Men deſire to be in Employment, from a ſecret deſire to be admir'd; whereas when they are in Employments, they do not thoſe Juſt and Virtuous things, for which they would be truly admir'd:

admir'd: And albeit Self-love makes them believe, that the being fear'd is a mark of true Dominion; yet they consider not, that even Dominion is only at the bottom desireable, because it is a sign of Merit and innate Excellency; and does please, because it makes us believe, by the Suffrage of others, that we are Noble and Excellent Persons, of which, even the least reasonable cannot seriously be perswaded, except they believe they have done virtuous things. And thus it were more reasonable to do what is really virtuous, than to cheat our selves, with thinking that others admire us. And it is very unreasonable not to do things rather for Virtue it self, than for the Applause which follows it, since that Applause derives its desireableness from Virtue, and so Virtue it self should be much more desired: And which

shews

ſhews yet more the weakneſs of our Reaſon, tho' in this we contradict the undeniable Sentiments of Mankind, yet we are cheated into it by a miſtake, as if it were eaſier to attain to the Applauſe of Virtue, than to Virtue it ſelf; whereas, quite contrary, it muſt be more difficult to attain Applauſe, ſince it depends upon many thouſands of Rivals and capricious Fools; whereas Virtue ſprings from a Man's own Breaſt, and we may have it, and keep it, in ſpight of all Mankind.

Every Man alſo, may in his private Station and Employment, find thouſands of Inſtances to confirm this Truth. And thus a Courtier ſhould conſider, that when he ſees his Prince bow and pray to a Superiour, before whom, he acknowledges himſelf to be a Worm and a Vapour, that certainly it is fit to

do nothing to diſpleaſe that Superiour Power, for gaining the favour of that Prince who adores him; and who would not think him mad, who would ſcorn to depend on a Monarch, but would take pains to flatter his Footman? When a Lawyer obſerves that Men take ſuch pains to ſecure in Law an Intereſt that cannot be ſecur'd againſt Accidents, he ſhould in reaſon conclude, that it is brutiſh not to take more pains to ſecure that which ſhall never fail: And when he obſerves how zealouſly the Eldeſt Men defend a Life that Accidents, nay, and Nature probably will end with the Proceſs, ſhould he not conſider, what pains ſhould be taken to ſecure a Life that continues for ever, free too from that Care, and thoſe Sickneſſes, that even before Death make this Life miſerable.

If a Souldier who were beſieg'd by

by his Enemies, ſhould abandon his Watch, and ſpend his time in Gaming and Drinking, or ſhould loſe the glorious opportunity of defeating them, for a Feaſt; or, as *Mark Anthony*, for a Miſtreſs: Eſpecially, if they be ſuch Enemies, whom we know, would not only kill, but torment us to Death, were he not to be accounted a Fool? But that is our caſe; for being ſurrounded with Temptations and Devils, we ſpend our time in Toyes and Trifles, and whilſt we hear that others have receiv'd an Immortal Crown, for having overcome their Spiritual Enemies, we, who value Fame and Glory ſo much, ſpend our time in pleaſing two or three ſilly Courtiers, whom we deſpiſe whilſt we attend them, and laugh at the Actions which we ſeem to admire. A Merchant were ridiculous, if he ſhould ſpend his Stock and his time in buying up

Wares

Wares that were unfashionable in that Country where he has his abode; and yet most Men employ themselves wholly in gathering Riches, and getting that Knowledge, which can neither be carried to Heaven with them, nor can comfort them when they are in Hell. And I have oft applauded the remark of a Gentlewoman, who hearing a whole Society admire one of her acquaintance, for a great Wit, told them, that his Father had left him a great Estate, which he had spent amongst Whores, that he had himself married a Whore, and had chang'd the Orthodox Religion, in which he was bred up, for a worse, and was not devout in that neither; and desir'd them to consider if that Man deserv'd to be call'd a Wit?

Nor are we only unreasonable in pursuing our Pleasures and Vices; but the very measures we

take

take in being Virtuous, ſhew how weak our Reaſon is, and how ill we uſe it. For our Friendſhip is for the moſt part but the preferring thoſe for whom we have a kindneſs, to thoſe who deſerve better both our kindneſs and thoſe employments; and thus we rob the Commonwealth, to repay the debt our Gratitude owes. The Courage of many is but a hypocritical diſguiſing of their fear, or a dull ignorance of their danger. For when a man goes to Battel, he fears to dye; but to diſguiſe this fear, he conſiders the ſhame of flying, and knowing certainly that his Reputation would be ruined, he fears more this certain loſs, than the hazard of being kill'd: but if he cannot attain to that, he at leaſt braves it out, and endeavours to cheat others, when he cannot ſatisfie himſelf.

Liberality and Charity are oftimes but the diſguiſed effects of Vanity,

Vanity, wherein men tacitely design rather their own perpetuity, than the advantage of those on whom they bestow what is given, in which they act very unreasonably: for if they lent it to God, he would restore it with a very enriching interest: But in bestowing it on Fame, they bestow it on a Cheat, which has oft deceived both them and others. And it still seems strange, that we will bestow it on that Multitude (for Fame and the Multitude are the same thing) to preserve any one of whom from starving, we would not bestow one farthing. And yet the World esteem those who do such things more than they do reasonable and judicious persons.

It is one of the chief and fundamental Dictates of Reason, that we should do to others as we would wish them to do to us. But tho' we exclaim against our Equals,

poor

poor Mortals, if they refuse us this measure, yet we allow it not to our great King and Soveraign. If we heard that any who pretended to be our friend, did sit tamely and hear us rail'd at, and contemn'd, we would conclude them base and treacherous; and a King would for this treat His Subjects as Rebels; but yet we sit not only to hear impious Creatures rail at Religion, and oft-times at Providence it self, with so little resentment, that we comply and even admire the Miscreant. I remember that I suggested once to a Person of Quality, who was busie about his Accompts, to consider if our Steward should spend our Rents upon his own Affairs, or upon maintaining his own Family or Luxury, and much more if he should riot it away with our Enemies, would we not hate him as a Rogue, and at least recal the

Trust

Truſt we gave him. But the Great Maſter of the Family of the Faithful having appointed us only to be Stewards, not to appropriate, but to beſtow the Eſtates he gave us for the uſe of his poor Children and Servants, preferring us kindly to as much as may ſatisfie our Conveniency, for ſo the Scripture, and even Reaſon it ſelf, teaches us: (for why ſhould the Wiſe God have beſtowed ſo much upon ſome, whilſt others want, if he had not deſign'd to level all by this neceſſity of diſtribution) yet we ſee his Children ſtarve, whilſt we employ the portions due to them upon the Wicked who are his Enemies. And thus we uſe the Almighty God at the rate we would not ſuffer from the meaneſt of our Servants. And ſo unreaſonable are even ſuch as are convinc'd of the reaſonableneſs of Charity, that by doing their charitable actions in publick, they

loſe

loſe the reward, by not preſerving the true deſign of it; for as our Saviour argues, *Mat.* 6. 4. *It is very juſt, that ſince they beſtow their Charity to gain the applauſe of men, they ſhould be rewarded with the applauſe for which they beſtowed it*; And how can they expect a reward from God, to pleaſe whom it was not given; and he is not obliged to repay what was not lent him: And they cannot expect double payment, for being paid by men, the Obligation is fully ſatisfied.

I ſhall conclude theſe Obſervations with what ordinarily we conclude our unreaſonable lives, and that is Death-bed Repentance, which of all things is the moſt unreaſonable. For if we believe the Rewards and Torments which attend our future ſtate, and make the delay ſo dangerous, why delay we? And if we believe neither of theſe, why repent we? The one cannot but make our preſent

pleaſures very bitter, by the fear that muſt thereupon haunt us; and the other cannot but needleſly cut off the pleaſures which we exclude as inconſiſtent with true Repentance. But which of us being condemn'd to horrible Torments, would delay to ſeek a remiſſion till the laſt hour? or being invited to leave our Cottage to receive a plentiful Eſtate, would delay to undertake his Journey? and yet we eaſily delay our Repentance, which can only preſerve us, condemn'd Sinners, from eternal Torments; and which would certainly bring us, poor Wretches, to that Inheritance of immortal Glory. And tho' we condemn our ſelves for leaving the diſpatch of our little Concerns till the laſt hour, yet we delay that great and neceſſary Work, on which a long Eternity hangs, for every trifle. And that which aggravates much this Neglect, is, that the Reaſons

which

which encourage us to it are as weak, as the thing it ſelf is abſurd and dangerous. For the hope we may live, has for its foundation a frail Body, that every accident can deſtroy; and it is a wonder, that when we hear of ſo many unexpected deaths, we ſhould not tremble to think, what if I had dyed? And tho' the Mercy of God be as infinite as his Juſtice, yet it is inſupportable inſolence in us to think, that we can be ſav'd when we pleaſe: this is not only to undervalue him as the laſt thing to be choſen, which implies that our infinitely glorious Maker is of all things leaſt worthy of our choice, but in this we exalt our ſelves above him, as if we might command him to beſtow upon us Heaven and Happineſs when-ever we thought fit to call for it. And which of us would beſtow the meaneſt favour upon him, who would reſolve to

oppose, or but neglect us as long as he pleas'd. The delaying makes us the unfitter, not only to crave, but even to receive, Mercy; and since all our life, albeit as piously spent as humane frailty can allow, is short enough for so great a Work; what can we expect from a few sickly hours distracted by new pains, and amazed at so many old sins? And the Scripture having commanded us to repent, and bring forth good Works; it has every where made good Works and a subsequent Amendment of our Lives, the mark as well as fruit of sincere Repentance: and therefore since a Death-bed Repentance must want this proof, it cannot but be by so much the more uncomfortable to us and our friends. Nor is there any generous Soul, who having receiv'd so great and undeserved a Pardon, would not desire to be able to live, that he might magnifie that

Infinite God to whom he ow'd it. I know that the Thief on the Croſs has been a ſtumbling-block to many others; but we reaſon very weakly from this inſtance of God's Mercy: for he by believing the Divinity of our Saviour amidſt all that could have been ſaid againſt it, when even the Jews were deſiring him to come down from the Croſs, and they would believe in him, and the other Thief was reviling him; did evidence as much Faith in that contracted Span when dying, as the beſt of us can do in a prolong'd Life. And it being fit for the Saviour of the World to ſhew his Power and Mercy when he was leading Captivity captive, that happy Thief can be no Precedent for us who remain unconverted after ſo many Miracles, that no reaſonable man can now doubt of, eſpecially if he never heard, as it's probable, of that Goſpel which

we have ſo oft undervalued, and if he has not neglected former offers of Mercy which we have ſo oft contemn'd. And ſhall we preſume on God's Goodneſs, becauſe one man was ſav'd, and but one, to preſerve Mankind from deſpair; not remembring, that as the Thief obtain'd a Pardon when he ſought it, ſo *Eſau* found no place for Repentance, tho' he ſought it earneſtly, *Heb.* 12. 17. And tho' thoſe who came in at the laſt hour, got as much as thoſe who had wrought at the firſt; yet it is remarkable, that it is ſaid, they came not ſooner, becauſe no man had deſired them. But let me conjure any noble Soul to conſider, that if God be worthy of the Adoration of Angels through all Eternity; and that we confeſs, that to walk, like *Enoch*, with him, will be ſo amiable and glorious, why ſhould we delay it for Pleaſures that are unworthy of a reaſonable Soul, and which laſt

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but for a moment? For at leaſt we loſe ſo much unexpreſſible Joy and Pleaſure; and in delaying our Repentance we continue to be ſick when we may be whole, to be blind when we may ſee, to be poor when we may be rich, to lye in Priſon when we may live at Liberty, and to be Slaves to our Enemies when we may be Heirs to a Kingdom. All which induce me to believe, that they who delay Repentance, deſign not to repent, but flatter themſelves with a falſe conceit of it; for to repent is to be grieved, and no man who is grieved can put it off at his pleaſure, no more than a man can be griev'd or not as he pleaſes. As alſo if a man reſolv'd ſincerely to repent, 'tis neceſſary that he were convinc'd of the greatneſs of his danger, and were actually aſham'd as well as afraid thereof; and if he were truly touch'd with theſe Convictions, he would not con-

tinue in the Courſes which occaſion'd them. And to finiſh all, is it not the height of unreaſonableneſs for a man to continue to do theſe things, of which he knows he muſt be aſham'd, and for which he reſolves to be exceedingly troubled and afflicted? And if we were coming into a Room where a man were wounding himſelf, would we not conclude him yet madder if he told us, that he would give himſelf more and more, becauſe ſuch a man got ſo many Wounds, and yet was cured.

Let me therefore conclude this Diſcourſe with the noble and juſt Reaſoning us'd by St. *Peter*, 2 *Epiſt.* 3. 10, 11. *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the Heavens will paſs away with a great noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with a fervent heat, the Earth alſo and the works that are therein ſhall be burnt up: Seeing then that all theſe things ſhall be diſſol-*

diſſolved, what manner of perſons ought ye to be in all holy Converſation and Godlineſs?

And what a frighted Creature will the greateſt Hero be, when he finds himſelf in the midſt of a burning World, having greater terrors within his Breaſt than theſe, rais'd by an Omnipotent God, and which will force him to cry to the Hills and Mountains to fall upon him, and cover him from the face of this angry Judge?

But theſe great and ſad Truths need (alas) to be preach'd by an Angel, to Hearers ſtanding upon the brink of their Grave, and having Heaven and Hell open'd before them.

PART II.

Whence proceeds it that Man is ſo unreaſonable, and how to improve our Reaſon.

IT is indeed very ſtrange, that Man, who improves daily ſo much in all Arts and Sciences, that are neither ſo neceſſary, ſo eaſie, nor ſo advantageous to us, ſhould ſtill decreaſe in this excellent Study, this Noble and Uſeful Knowledge: Let us then enquire a little into the occaſions of theſe Errours in his reaſonings, and we ſhall find them ſo ſilly, that

they alſo diſcover to us new Weakneſſes in his Reaſon.

I know that we generally charge this on Man's Atheiſm, imagining he would reaſon juſtly, if he believ'd the Principles I have laid down; but this is a miſtake, for Atheiſts reaſon moſt weakly, as well as others, and moſt inconſequentially to their own Principles: for even Atheiſts diſquiet themſelves for Fame and Money, and by Whoring and Drinking deſtroy their Bodies, which is all they dote upon, and ſhould preſerve, and which ſhews their unreaſonableneſs, according to their own Principles; and that Infidelity is not the cauſe of falſe reaſoning, appears clearly, becauſe ſuch as are not Atheiſts, reaſon falſly; and we may obſerve, that ſuch as believe that by the ill Diets they uſe, their terrible pains will be renew'd, do yet adventure on them; oh, that they only of all Mankind

kind were the unreaſonable Men! But how unreaſonable are they, who believing there is a Crown of Glory reſerv'd for thoſe that will run that Heavenly race, chuſe rather to ſit Tipling and Gaming; that believe the Son of God ſtands ſtretching out his arms, ready to preſerve them, and yet will rather ſink down into that fearful Pit, from which there is no redemption; who will rather ſtarve than ſeek that Heavenly Manna, and languiſh of their Wounds, than ſeek the Balm of *Gilead*, from the hand of a loving Father; whom no Judgments on others can awaken, nor Mercies to themſelves can oblige; Sick amidſt ſo many Cures; Poor, amidſt ſuch Plenty; Blind, notwithſtanding ſo much Light; and Inſenſible, in ſpight of ſo many Convictions.

But how can Men reaſon well, ſince they neither underſtand the true

'true uſe of Reaſon, nor what Man is? And theſe are the two firſt and great occaſions of our Errours.

As to Reaſon, let us examin our ſelves narrowly, and we ſhall find that Men think they need not Reaſon in the great and conſiderable deſigns of Life, as if theſe were matters to be taken upon truſt; And as if Reaſon were to be us'd only in matters of State, or in Debate or Trade. And I deſire to know, who ſits down to reaſon with himſelf, why he lives ſo or ſo, or to know, if what he does, is according to the Rules given him, for regulating his Actions. I have my ſelf ſpent Twenty years in reaſoning eagerly to ſecure other Mens Eſtates; but I have ſpent very little time to conſider, by a nobler reaſoning, why do I ſpend ſo much time in reaſoning for other Men, and yet ſo little for my ſelf? tho' in the mean time,

I do but too much prefer my ſelf to all others? You will find ſome Divines very buſie in arguing, whether God from all Eternity could have made Creatures, and yet theſe Men will never conſider what ſhall become of them in Eternity. The cure then of this, is to conſider Reaſon, not as a Tool, uſeful for Gain or Fame only, but as a Square, put in our hands, by our kind God, to inſtruct us how to make our Actions ſtraight and even; and as a Workman does firſt mind to have all regulated by his Square, and after his work is finiſhed, applyes the Square to what he has made; ſo ought we, when any thing is deſign'd by us, reſolve to do all in it by the rules of Reaſon, and when the Action is ended, examin if it be ſo: And to invite us to this, God has not oblig'd us to ſeek for this any foreign or remote

Remedy

Remedy; no, nor to owe our Remedy to any other; but has plac'd his Candle in our Breasts, and honour'd us with the being our own Governours and Directors. Let us then think, and think of matters of Importance, and of matters that import us; let us think as much of Heaven, which cannot be taken from us, when once we are possessed of it, as we do of temporal Estates, in the possession of which we cannot be secured. Let us think as much upon our selves, whom we value too much, as upon others, whom we value too little.

We use oft-times our Reason to argue falsly for Interest, or by Pre-ingagement, and this debauches our Reason, after which it continues easily in this Errour: For this takes off that Reverence and Esteem we ought to have for just reasoning. Thus Lawyers favour-

favouring ſtill, and being oblig'd to maintain the cauſe of thoſe who have retain'd them, force their Reaſon to find Arguments for their own ſide; Divines thinking themſelves oblig'd to defend the Poſitions of that Church wherein they were born, reaſon ſtill in its defence: States-Men, to fortifie their Partie, endeavour to perſwade all Men to embrace it; and Orators, not excepting the Philoſophers amongſt them, to beautifie their diſcourſes, urge things that are meer Flouriſhes, having much Luſtre, but no Strength; great inſtances whereof are to be ſeen in *Seneca*, and generally in all the Heathens, who, as I ſhall ſhew expreſly elſewhere, were forc'd, by not knowing the true Principles whereupn Reaſon was to be built, to maintain by falſe reaſonings the true Principles that they deſign'd to recommend. We do likewiſe form our Morality

lity by our Intereſt, and guide not our Intereſt by our Morals; and after we have form'd any Deſign, we find out Reaſons to perſwade us that it is juſt: And thus we oft-times miſtake Intereſt, Imagination, and Prejudices, for ſolid Reaſon; the true cure whereof lies in being painful and curious in our firſt Reaſonings; and as careful not to commit Errours by falſe and careleſs Arguings, in matters of eternal Happineſs, as Mathematicians are in their Demonſtrations about Figures and Concluſions, which cannot ſecure them againſt one Misfortune, nor add one day to their Lives.

Bigotry, and falſe conceptions of Religion, do alſo darken much our Reaſon; for ſometimes, by implicit Faith and Infallibility, (thoſe great Tyrants over Reaſon) we accuſtome our ſelves to Lazineſs, wherein we loſe the habit of Reaſoning; and ſometimes

times by impoſing upon us things inconſiſtent with it, and by teaching us that it is a dangerous Guide, we leſſen our own eſteem for it, and create inſenſibly in our ſelves a Jealouſie that it is an Impoſture; and we baffle it ſo on theſe occaſions, that at other times it dares not try its own ſtrength. I confeſs, that it ought in a juſt ſubmiſſion yield to his commands who made it, nor ſhould we hear the Servant when the Maſter ſpeaks; but except when the will of God does expreſly ordain ones Reaſon to ſubmit, we ought not to deny our ſelves the true exerciſe of it, to pleaſe Men, who underſtand not its true ſtrength, or do upon deſigns impoſe on us the abandoning of it. And this has infected us ſo far, that by it all other Sciences did fall very low. And if ſome bold Defender, ſuch as *Cartes* and others, had not interpos'd

pos'd, we had been led by implicit Faith, in all the Objects of Knowledge as well as in all the Objects of Faith; and every School-man would have exacted as much absolute submission to his own Dictates, as we should pay to the unerring Commands of our infallible Creator. And oft-times Self-love passing for Religion, blinds us whilst it promises Illumination: As a clear instance whereof I shall desire any wise Man to consider, that if this were true Zeal which led Men to hazard all they have for the ridiculous difference about indifferent Ceremonies or Tenets, why do they not hazard all they possess for the defence of the Christian Religion against the Turks; since in sound Reason, and by a Mathematical certainty, the whole is to be preferred to a part; and to prove that this is the effect of Self-love, and not of true Devotion,

tion, it is very obſervable, that the leſs the differences be in ſuch caſes, we are ordinarily the more paſſionate in them, being inclin'd rather to have our Sentiments ſuſtain'd, than the Commands of God obey'd; moſt men being to themſelves their own only God, and being aſham'd that they ſhould err even in the meaneſt circumſtance.

Men may think me inſolent when I tell them that they underſtand not themſelves, but they ſhould bear this from me, who would willingly wiſh that they could juſtly tax me of a Lye in it. But for my ſecurity I muſt put them in mind, that Monſieur *Paſchal* told them before me, that he had laid aſide the ſtudy of the Mathematicks, becauſe few underſtood to converſe with him in it, and betook himſelf to conſider Man; as thinking that a Subject ſo near, and of ſuch concern to every

every one, that all could not but underſtand it; and yet he found this leſs underſtood than the other. But that I may contribute my mean Endeavors for clearing them in this, I muſt deſire them to conſider, that Man being created to love and admire God, it muſt follow by a neceſſary conſequence, that God was to be the Center of all his Knowledge; and right Reaſon was a drawing of all his Concluſions as ſo many Lines, to reſt upon God as that Center. But Man deſigning to exalt himſelf, does by a woful miſtake make himſelf the Center, and Self-love, as another Reaſon, draws all into this deſign. And thus, whereas we ſhould ſtudy to underſtand the excellent Works of the Creation, that in them we may underſtand the Infiniteneſs of that wonderful Creator; we ſtudy them only thereby to adorn our own Spirits, and thus to raiſe an Eſteem in

others for us: and crook in all the Concluſions we make to our ſelves and our Conveniency, as the Center of all our Deſigns. And thus we have invented new Sciences, Arts, and Recreations, ſuch as Criticiſms, Rraillery, Comedies, Tragedies, &c. meerly that our Works may be admir'd as much as his. And therefore it is impoſſible we can ever reaſon juſtly, ſince all the Lines of our Reaſoning tend to a wrong Center; but if we return to our Duty in reſolving to love and admire him, and not our ſelves, every Concluſion being drawn from true Principles and Poſitions, would recover its original ſtreightneſs. And thus if we ador'd God more than Kings and Princes, we would not diſpleaſe God to pleaſe them, that we might be enrich'd or advanc'd by them. If we ſtudied only to know him in his Creatures, and not to raiſe our own Fame by

them,

them, we would not toil and vex our ſelves to acquire Fame; nor forget ſerving and adoring him, that we might get time to know thoſe Sciences, and be eſteem'd for, and delighted in that Learning. Self-love, amongſt its other Cheats, hinders us to ſtudy Chriſtian Morality, becauſe that would let us ſee how vile and frail we are; and therefore, as a diverſion, it carries us impetuouſly to ſtudy other Sciences, wherein we may admire our own Wit and Sagacity: but that which ſeems to me the true Notion of Learning is, that it ſhould be a deſign to know and admire God in his Works; for which Natural Philoſophy and Mathematicks are to be ſtudied; in his Providence, which we may know by Hiſtory; in his Juſtice to be known by Law; and in his governing the Soul of Man, which is the Object of Moral Philoſophy: but above all,

all, in himself and the Mysteries of our Salvation, taught by Divinity when well directed.

A Proof of which, as well as a new Cause of our Errours and Reasoning is, That the first Rule by which our Reasons are squared and directed, are the Writings of those Illustrious Heathens, who in our Youth are recommended to us as the only Guides and Patterns: The best of which, such as *Plato*, *Epictetus*, *Seneca*, and others, being absolutely ignorant of Man's great Disease, which is Original Sin, could not but mistake the Remedies of his Actual Transgressions; and knowing nothing more excellent than their own Reason, they concluded it was sufficient. And having from their Poets and Traditions learned mean, low thoughts of their Gods, who were in those days made the chief Actors of the sins they should have punished, and described as more

employ'd

employ'd in ſatisfying their own Paſſions, than in governing of the World. Thoſe miſled Philoſophers did not only equal themſelves to, but raiſed themſelves above the Gods, whom they taught others and themſelves to adore. And to that height did this miſtake in their Reaſoning fly, that *Seneca* concludes his Wiſe man much preferable to the Gods, becauſe the good they did, aroſe from the neceſſity of their own Nature; whereas man being left to a freedom in his Actions, made them good by his own wiſe choice. *Epictetus* founds his Philoſophy upon that only Principle, *That the things within us are in our own power, but the things without us are not.* Whereas St. *Paul* from Heaven aſſures us, That *of our ſelves, as of our ſelves, we can do no good.* And our own Experience doth moſt convincingly agree with St. *Paul*, againſt *Epictetus*. And where-

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as a Principle in any Science ſhould be an uncontroverted Truth, we find daily that this Principle is an abſolute Lye. For that man who thinks that he can with an unerring hand govern his Paſſions, has never undertaken the ſubduing of them. And *video meliora, proboque, deteriora ſequor*, agrees much better with our own Experience, as well as with St. *Paul*, who, tho' among the greateſt of Saints, complains juſtly, *Rom.* 7. 15. *That which I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I:* and therefore is forced to cry out, *Who ſhall deliver me from this body of Death?* *Cicero*'s Diſcourſe concerning the Nature of Gods, and *Plato*'s Dialogues of the Immortality of the Soul, may convince us how weakly thoſe great Patterns of Philoſophy do reaſon, even upon thoſe Subjects where Reaſon was not altogether miſtaken. And from

thoſe, and all the Writings of the Ancient Pagans, I do more juſtly conclude, That thoſe great Ideas which our Maſters have given us of them, and the Eloquence which ſhines every where in their Writings, have miſled us from the ways that lead to the New *Jeruſalem*; and from admiring the Beauty of Holineſs which ſhines in thoſe Scriptures, which have God Almighty and the Holy One of *Iſrael* for their Author and Subject, and in which we are taught to expect more help from Heaven, than from our ſelves, againſt our innate and original Corruption, which is more to be overcome by praying than thinking, and can never be overcome without that Humility and Self-denial, which was abſolutely unknown to the Heathens, as I hope to prove in another Diſcourſe, where theſe thoughts ſhall have their full ſcope.

I am far from deſigning in this to root out Self-love, but rather to direct and improve it. For certainly God has grafted Self-love in every Man's Heart, to the end, Man might thereby be the more oblig'd to love him, to whom he owes all thoſe Excellencies which he loves in himſelf, and that he may be thereby oblig'd to preſerve himſelf as a part of the Univerſe, and which is in general preſerv'd by every Man's loving himſelf; and ſo far has God allow'd this Self-love, that he puniſhes Man when he deſtroyes himſelf. But that Self-love which I here inveigh againſt, is a falſe and impoſture paſſion, whereby Man makes himſelf the Spring, from which all his Deſigns follow, the Mark at which they aim, and the Rule by which they are to be ſquared, than which nothing can be more unreaſonable. For how can we juſtifie

our ſelves, in requiring abſolute deference from all that is ours, if we yield it not to that Infinite Being to whom we owe all; and as he brought us out of nothing, ſo we ſhould ſtill remember that we are nothing before him. If every Man made himſelf the Rule, and drew all to himſelf, what a diſtracted thing would this World be, and how impoſſible would it be for any Man to live comfortably in it? And as a private Man would be eſteem'd mad, who in a Court, would think that all things ſhould be deſign'd there for his Glory and Pleaſure: So much more is Man a diſtracted Creature, when he makes himſelf the chief aim of all his Actions. Whereas, if a Courtier take great care to pleaſe the Monarch, and to deſign his Glory and Advantage, he will thereby raiſe himſelf in a ſecurer, as well as a juſter way. And there-

therefore becauſe Self-love is ſo ſtrong an Oratour, and is ſtill at the bottom of all perſwaſion, we ſhould examine cautiouſly, what is urged upon us under the diſguiſe of Self-love, and whether we do really love our ſelves when we yield to thoſe things to which we are tempted. I ſhall conclude this Period with a ſad Aſſertion, That in ſpight of all that Men profeſs, yet too many really, at the bottom, miſtake themſelves ſo far, as to think that they have no original Frailties, and therefore that they are able to command their Paſſions, and that they need no Divine Aſſiſtance, that they are nothing elſe, ſave that body which we ſee, that they are not to die ſo ſoon, and that the things they are doing now are the only things to be car'd for, and will remain with them for ever. And if moſt Men have this *Idea* of themſelves, I deſire to know

how they can draw juſt concluſions from ſuch miſtaken Principles.

Another cauſe of our Reaſoning ſo weakly, is, that the things of another World are too remote to ſeem great to us, and too ſpiritual to be diſcerned by carnal Eyes. The leaſt thing, when plac'd immediately before our Eyes, will intercept, and exclude all further proſpect; and even the leaſt conſpicuous Objects, and Senſual things do, by a conſtant tide of emanations, flow in continually upon us, ſo as to fill our thoughts, and leave little room for any thing elſe. But as a Remedy to this, let us conſider, that ſince even Corporeal, and Senſual Pleaſures charm us only when we think much upon them, it follows, that thinking is the Source, and Origin of Eſteem: tho' we ſee not the Riches of a golden Mine, yet our belief will

make

make us toil for it, and the hope of ſucceeding to an Eſtate will oblige us to follow eagerly what that hope ſuggeſts. And ſince *Faith is the evidence of things not ſeen*, it does repreſent things to come, with a certainty; that makes them preſent; and albeit it may be objected, that we have ſeen ſome ſuch things as theſe Mines, and Worldly Succeſſions, and therefore it is that we believe and love them more; yet that is of no moment: For the miracles that Men have heard of, and the wonderful works of Providence which we daily ſee, eſpecially when born in upon us, by the conviction of our own Conſciences, ſeem as ſtrong motives as any that ſenſe can afford Conſcience, that luminous Senſe of the Soul, being ſtronger, and more perſwaſive to any that will hear it, than any of our dull and outward Senſes, which have

only assistance from stupid Flesh and Blood: Conversation also about things Spiritual and Divine, will be in place of Sensual Emanations to us, and will represent a future Life, and the World to come to a hearkning Soul, as if it were present; nor will the Almighty fail to assist that Eloquence which has him for its only and ultimate scope.

The Soul certainly being a Spiritual substance, can more easily unite it self to immaterial Objects, such as a future state of Happiness, than to the terrestrial Objects, with which we fill it; and the only fault is in us, who do not apply our selves to the thinking on these. Do we not find that such as aspire to Fame are more taken with it than any Man is with Meat or Drink, yea, and Life it self, for the conquest whereof all these are contemn'd: And yet Fame is a meer immaterial

terial Object, that has nothing affecting the Senſes otherwiſe than by thinking nothing Preſent, nothing Corporeal; and generally, the Spirit of Man is more pleas'd with Expectation than with any preſent Poſſeſſion whatſoever; ſo far, that if we expect any little accident, it will buſie more our thoughts, and faſten them more to it than a thouſand things of greater value already poſſeſs'd. This then can be no ſuch hard task as our lazineſs perſwades it to be.

Tho' we be convinc'd of the truths on which I have founded my Obſervations, yet we advert not to them, nor heed them. Thus tho' an Object were moſt conſpicuous, yet if we dote ſo upon any other, as never to turn our eyes that way, we ſhall not be taken with either its Value or Beauty. We are bred up in a great eſteem for the things

of this World, and ſo are rather pre-engag'd than blind, and buy not that Pearl of price, becauſe we have laid out our Stock on other trifles, which is a great defect in our Reaſon, and for which we would contemn other Merchants: And this is to be cur'd by having a true value for things, and by rectifying all our *Ideas*; and therefore, he who reſolves to reaſon juſtly, ſhould begin firſt to conſider, when any thing occurs, of what uſe it may be, and of what value it is. As for inſtance, Is this Land, for which I am ſinfully providing Money, worth Heaven? or this Man, whom I am to pleaſe, able to make me happy than God Almighty, to whom in this I prefer him? And ſo, like a skilful Chymiſt, reſolve every thing into its true Principles, and then try its value; and like a Merchant, who has been often cheated,

reſolve

reſolve at laſt to conſider what ſuch things are worth, whether they will be faſhionable where we are going, and whether they will return us the Stock we lay out upon them?

For improving this thought, we ſhould conſider, that tho' we diſcover truths, yet we do not take time to ponder them ſufficiently: And thus, tho' we be convinc'd, yet we improve not ſufficiently our convictions. Self-love, and the love of Eaſe has us'd us to a partial and ſuperficial way of enquiry; and from this alſo proceed theſe wanderings which weaken thoſe pious Meditations, and diſturb that earneſtneſs in Prayer, by which we can only procure a juſt illumination in our reaſoning; deſultorineſs of thought grows daily when it is not leſſen'd, and the next days wanderings are the puniſhment of thoſe which we ſuffered to prevail

prevail yeſterday. But ſhould we not be aſham'd, that we cannot think our Salvation worthy of ſome ſerious hours, ſince it is that which God Almighty has conſtantly deſign'd, and follow'd from all Eternity, tho' we are far more concerned in it. And that we can ſpend many entire hours upon a queſtion of Law or Mathematicks, and yet cannot fix our thoughts upon that Infinite Being, in whom there are far more infinite Perfections; an Object that can never be exhauſted, where every thought would open a new Scene of thoughts, yet more delightful; by which, Angels have been for many thouſands of years detain'd in conſtant raptures, contemplating thoſe admirable Myſteries, which the Scripture tells us, the Angels deſire to pry into, finding by a conſtant enquiry, new matter of holy Learning,

and

and bleſſed Curioſity; and are ſaid by God himſelf to have learn'd this from thoſe happy Chriſtians to whom thoſe myſteries were firſt reveal'd, *Eph.* 3. 8. Learn then, O Chriſtian, to manage thy Spirit, try firſt by what means thou uſeſt to fix it on other occaſions, and improving theſe from the obvious advantages that pious fixation will yield above all others; beg humbly, by Prayer, a new ſupply to thy native Forces, acknowledge to God that thou haſt taught thy own thoughts this ſeditiouſneſs and tumultuarineſs of which thou complain'ſt, and hope, that as by frequent yieldings thou feddeſt that Vice into a habit, ſo that by frequent and reſolute oppoſitions thou may'ſt deſtroy that obſtinate and dangerous habit, and introduce a contrary one, which will make thy fix'dneſs eaſie and pleaſant. Frequent reaſonings

ſonings do alſo not only make us argue more ſtrongly and eaſily, but do warm us into a conviction firſt, and then into a love for that for which we contend: And thus Lawyers are oft-times convinc'd, even in the ill Cauſes they plead; and Hereticks fix themſelves in their Errors, by frequent conteſts for them. Why then ſhould we not argue more frequently both againſt our ſelves, and with others, upon theſe excellent Truths, by which alſo we ſhould be engag'd in honour to walk ſutably to theſe truths, of which we profeſs to others that we are convinc'd? And who could be ſo abſurd, as after he has been debating againſt another for his Drinking, yet would invite him to a Debauch? But, alas, every Man loves to debate in his own Calling, except the Chriſtian: And it is become as much a ſhame to talk of Devotion as it ought

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to be our Glory and Delight; and men ſeem afraid to debate, leſt by being too much convinc'd of what they ought to do, they ſhould be too much terrified for what they have done; and ſo theſe Convictions beget an uneaſineſs to them, when to gratifie their humour, they are tempted to renew their ſins.

Hypocriſie affords us a clear proof of this partiality, as well as of Man's contradicting himſelf; for to confeſs there is a God who is Omniſcient, who knows the ſecrets of hearts, and before whom there is nothing hid in Heaven or Earth, and yet to think that we can conceal our thoughts from his all-ſeeing Eye, implies a flat Contradiction; as it alſo does to care for nothing but what may cauſe an eſteem in our ſelves, for our ſelves. We really value other mens approbation, becauſe it confirms us in our own: nor would

would the vaineſt man alive value all the flatteries imaginable, if he thought he could not deſerve them. Yet in Hypocriſie we muſt know, that we deſerve not the applauſe to which we pretend, and it is worthy of our thoughts to enquire impartially, how men can reconcile theſe in themſelves; for the moſt debauched Reaſon will not adventure upon any Contradiction without ſome ſeeming reconciliation. And tho' at the firſt it may ſeem that want of conſideration is the cauſe of this, yet this cannot be; for if we know not that we are maſquing, it is no Hypocriſie; and on the contrary, Hypocriſie requires great reflection, becauſe it needs much precaution. The Reaſon then of the firſt muſt be, That as to God we truſt our Repentance, and to his Mercy; as if forſooth, we did him little wrong, by making his Creature appear more excellent than

than it is, and as if it might prejudge his Service to let others see, that we are many times more wicked than they, or that we did God good Service in encouraging others to be Pious by our good Example, and that we by Hypocrisie do only raise an esteem, or come to an employment by which we may be truly serviceable to God in our other actions. But I really think, that the Heart of Man is so narrow, that it can hold only one Scheme of thoughts at once, and therefore this little Soul being fill'd with a desire of applause, and with the shame of being silly and undeserving, it reflects indeed, but all its reflections look that way. The man is full of this, and intent upon it, and so he sees not the Contradiction, how palpable soever it be; but yet it is so notorious and discernable, that I may justly conclude his Reason weak, if not blind.

who

who does not diſcern it. The Cure then of this ſubtile Cheat muſt be by purſuing this Impoſture into its ſecret receſs, by ſeeing this Player before he put on his fine Cloaths and Diſguiſes, by turning all our thoughts to God, and from our ſelves, adverting ſeriouſly and impartially to every little circumſtance in the deſign that is to be conſidered.

I have oft-times admired the prevalency of Cuſtom above Reaſon; and tho' Brutes, who want Reaſon, or Children, in whom it is yet ſcarce ripened, be led by it; yet what a ſtrange thing is it, that in men who have Reaſon in maturity, Cuſtom becomes not only a ſecond Nature, but overcomes Nature, and is a ſecond Nature, becauſe it almoſt extirpates Reaſon, which was our firſt Nature. For tho' the older we grow, our Reaſon ſhould grow the ſtronger, yet it falls ſtill weaker, and melts

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ſo before Cuſtom, that even the vertuous and dutiful Actions we do, ſeem rather the effects of Cuſtom than of Reaſon. For if they proceeded from Reaſon, the ſame Reaſon which prompted us to do them, would oblige us to act vertuouſly on all other occaſions. And we ſee that we alter our Vertues as the Faſhions and Cuſtoms of our Country change. But to conclude this expoſtulation, I cannot but wonder that a man ſhould be call'd reaſonable, after he has truſted the making Laws and Moulds for living happily and dutifully to the Multitude or Crowd, the worſt of all Judges; and which we our ſelves contemn as an ignorant, giddy, and capricious Rabble.

Of which influence of Cuſtom over Reaſon, many different Cauſes occur to me; for ſometimes I think that Cuſtoms eſtabliſh and fix themſelves in us whilſt we are yet

yet young, that Reaſon can neither defend it ſelf nor us, eſpecially as to unuſual Pleaſures, which are the proper and natural objects of our firſt years: and like Weeds that have over-grown the ground, tho' never ſo fertile, they hinder the better Plants from growing up. To prevent which, it is neceſſary that we teach young ones to reaſon very early, and accuſtom them to a Chriſtian Logick, that is better than what they can learn in the Schools. Thus we may make Cuſtom it ſelf uſeful rather than hurtful to Reaſon, and teach it to ſerve, whereas now it governs. And I know one who cur'd his habitual Swearing by arguing with himſelf, That ſince even the King's Enemies were able to reſtrain themſelves from ſpeaking Treaſon, by reflecting on its dangerous conſequences, it was ſtrange, that he who was convinc'd that Swearing

did

did draw on more dangerous conſequences, could not abſtain from a cuſtom that was altogether hateful, without the leaſt allay of pleaſure or advantage, to which the others might pretend.

Sometimes I think, that Cuſtom having the force of the Multitude which ſupports it, they all concur to pull back a well reſolved Man from his vertuous reſolutions; and Cuſtom prevails rather by numbers than by ſtrength: And to prevent this, it is neceſſary for a man who reſolves to Reaſon juſtly, to withdraw for ſome time from the Crowd: *Prov.* 18. 1. *A man*, ſays *Solomon*, *having ſeparated himſelf, meddleth with all Wiſdom*; and *Seneca* tells us, That *ſanabimur modo à cætu ſeparemur.* Jeſus Chriſt alſo who has triumphed over the World, is by ſtrong Interceſſions, to be called in againſt this potent Enemy, who has ſhewn us, that he can

throw

throw out and diſpoſſeſs that Devil whoſe name is Legion: but the Multitude is never ſo corrupt, but that ſtill ſome are to be found who can aſſiſt us in reaſoning juſtly upon things; and we ſhould alſo remember, that we value ſo little the Multitude, that we ſtand not in awe of what they ſay of us, when we are gaining Money, or ſatisfying our Pleaſures: why then ſhould we ſtill ſpend all we have, and deny our ſelves all Pleaſure in following Cuſtom, or courting Fame; ſince Cuſtom and Fame are but the Dictates of the Multitude, an Homage which unthinking men are forced to pay the Rabble, becauſe they dare not ſeriouſly reflect on what they do? Or which deſigning men pay them in hopes to make them firſt Tools to their Ambition, and thereafter Slaves to their Tyranny.

But at other times the ſtrength of Cuſtom flows from our lazineſs, who

who love the way that is chalked out to us, and think it ſafe to follow, rather than lead the crowd; cheated to this by a cowardly Humility, which proves our never having conſidered the Nobleneſs of our own Origine: which is to be cured by a generous reſolution of deſpiſing difficulties; and of being Slaves, as all perſons are, who love better to obey, than to examine the Dictates of others; and we are moſt unreaſonable, when we have ſo ſtrong deſires to lead the Multitude to our ruine, as in ſeditious Tumults and Factions; and yet will be content to be tamely led by them in what is much nobler and of greater conſequence. How much more do we praiſe thoſe great Legiſlators, who govern'd the Multitude by their Vertues, than thoſe Sycophants who adored them by ſubmiſſions? There is Light in Vertue and Religion, and there

is

is none dares reſiſt it; it is able to aſtoniſh as well as convince: nor are men ſo wicked as not to deſire to be aſſiſted by ſome happy Genius, in what they are convinced is beſt. And every man almoſt ſtands only in awe of another, expecting and wiſhing ſome *Moſes* to undertake their delivery.

Generally Self-love ſeems to lead into theſe Sentiments, as thinking the Multitude will cry up their own inclinations, and is unwilling to check that Multitude from which it expects applauſe; and whoſe many Suffrages it needs to maintain it, againſt that inward ſenſe it has of its own weakneſs and ſillineſs: and this is to be cured by a noble reflection upon the dignity of our firſt Creation; and a deſire to be again like to that God whoſe Image at firſt we were, and whoſe Sons we may yet be, if we can raiſe our hopes above thoſe lower Spheres of ſenſual

Joys

Joyes and Pleaſures which poyſon us when they ſeem ſweet, and cheat us when they appear great.

One of the dreadful effects of our following the Example of others, is, that we think it is ſufficient to be as reaſonable as they: And thus we fooliſh and unreaſonable Mortals, ſtint and bound one anothers goodneſs; now this we ſhall eaſily perceive to be moſt unreaſonable, when we conſider that no Man will ſatisfie himſelf in being as powerful or rich as his Neighbours; tho' theſe be much leſs deſireable for a Soul and Spirit, which is the Image of an Infinite God, and is, after all its beſt endeavours here, very far from attaining to that degree of perfection which is even requiſite to the life of a Chriſtian. Devotion is a Race, and who is it that when he runs with many Rivals, will content himſelf to

be in the throng, especially if the Prize be considerable: And therefore the Apostle exhorts us to *forget those things which are behind, and to reach forth to those things that are before, pressing towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus*, Phil. 3. 14. We are not only obliged to press on to obtain the Crown, but being pursued by our spiritual Enemies, we are concerned to use all the speed that is possible. And would not we conclude him mad, who if he were pursu'd for his life, would not desire to be past all danger, but content himself that he were not the last amongst those who endeavoured to escape?

It is strange, that notwithstanding that Custom does so lead us when we go not where we ought to go, but where others have gone before us, yet we oftimes err to a contrary extreme, and

and by a contrary reaſon, which is as falſe and more dangerous than the other, reaſoning weakly and falſly from a deſign and deſire to be ſingular, and conſequently to be admir'd; thus even whilſt in this we oppoſe the multitude, we deſign to pleaſe them too; for no Man admires what does not delight him; and probably, theſe ſame contradictors would have choſen rather to have gone to Fame in the beaten path, by a direct pleaſing and following of them; but finding a Crowd before them in it, which they could not paſs by, they, by a long and a dangerous circuit, run before, and endeavour to keep the Paſs on their Rivals, and hinder them from coming up at Fame; and tho' they want the multitude at preſent, yet they hope to make them follow, elſe they would not differ from them; for few would care to continue

alone till the laſt, tho' they love to be ſingular at firſt; yet this humour is a very great Enemy to true reaſoning, for it introduces a habit of arguing falſly; and it is difficult in this dark eſtate to recover our road; if we once quit our light, one errour emboldens us to commit another, and it is the puniſhment of it, when committed; even thoſe who care not to oppoſe Truth, love to be conſequential in their oppoſition; for to do otherwiſe, were to be guilty of a double and more palpable vice in reaſoning.

Another great hinderance to right Reaſoning, is Senſuality: For though I am far from being of their opinion, who think the Soul nothing but the Animal Spirits; ſince we cannot conceive how matters can think ſo delicately and ſubtily, yet there is no doubt but the tempers of the

Body

Body has great influence on the Mind; and that Sobriety does purifie the Blood, and make these animal Spirits fitter Organs for the Soul; as on the other hand, Drunkenness drowns it, Gluttony stupifies it, and even after that time has dissipated those loads which oppress the Soul, there remains a stock of dregs which are easily inflam'd into Lust, Rage, and other brutal Passions, which in a more lasting manner inslave it. Therefore Pagans have recommended Sobriety as a Diet for the Soul as well as the Body, and the Scripture Fasting, as a Religious Duty; and since there is none of us so Brutal, but if we were about to Preach, Plead, or assist in a publick Judicature, we would be careful to avoid all these Excesses, lest thereby our Reason might be disturbed or clouded; we ought much more to shun them, with

an Eye to the ſervice of an Infinite God, and the preſervation of our immortal Souls, minding in this the obſervation of the Prophet, *Wine, and new wine take away the heart*; and the advice of our Saviour, *See that you be not overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs.*

There remain yet two vigorous Enemies to our Reaſon to be ſubdued, Bigotry and Raillery; which tho' they be contrary to one another; Bigotry treating things that are ridiculous as Sacred, and Raillery treating things Sacred as ridiculous, yet they both conſpire againſt our Reaſon, and are the favourite extravagancies of the times, which obliges me to inſiſt the more upon them.

I define Bigotry to be a laying too much ſtreſs upon any circumſtantial point of Religion or Worſhip, and the making all other eſſential Duties ſubſervient thereto, and

and got its name from an occasion extravagant like it self. *Rolland* first Duke of *Normandy*, being obliged to do homage to *Charles* King of *France*, for that Dutchy, refus'd to kiss his Foot, except the King would raise it himself to his mouth; and when it was told him that the Solemnity consisted in his taking up the King's Foot and kissing it, he answer'd, *Ne se bigot*, that is to say in old *Norman*, Not so by God; Whereupon the King and Court derided him, and the *Normans* were from that occasion called Bigots, as they who adhered pertinaciously to Ridiculous Extravagancies. These latter Ages having, in this dotage of the World, produc'd multitudes, who mistaking Reformation for Humour, and seeing some Devout Men admired for separating from Idolatrous and Superstitious Churches, because they would not

Du Lange verb. Bigot.

reform great and fundamental Errours, imagined that every thing was to be ſtuck at with the ſame zeal which theſe ſhewed in matters of greateſt conſequence, and by a farther effect of the ſame zeal, they proceeded to force others to concur with them in their extravagancies, which ſurpriſing diſtraction forced Men to beſtow on them the name of Bigots; Superſtition could not ſo well agree to them, that being only an exceſſive Worſhip paid to a Deity, true or falſe, from an ill-grounded fear of miſchief from it: nor could dogmatiſing ſerve, that being only a poſitiveneſs in any Opinion, joyned to the vanity of thinking, that the Dogmatizer had right to dictate to others; nor Opiniarity, becauſe that conſiſts only in adhering too ſtifly to any Opinion in ſpight of the beſt Reaſons; nor Schiſm, becauſe it

is an unneceſſary ſeparation; nor Hereſie, for tho' it is an obſtinate Errour in ſome important point, yet it is always in matters of Faith; whereas Bigotry reſts only in matters of ſmall importance; but tho Bigotry properly relates to matters Eccleſiaſtical in our late acceptation, yet it is by an eaſie ſtretch uſed to expreſs opiniatrities of all kinds; and if we conſider its original, we muſt conclude, that it has been drawn to matters Eccleſiaſtick, and is appropriated now to them, becauſe they are the moſt remarkable and frequent inſtances or effects of this miſchievous Principle. For we may juſtly ſay, that Bigotry is the Hypochondriaciſm of Reaſon, the Bedlam of Religion, and the Ape of Infallibility.

Inſtances of this Bigotry, as they are very frequent, ſo they are very ancient. The Apoſtles

themſelves were forc'd very early to inveigh againſt Zeal that was not according to Knowledge; and the chief of their Scholars, who had been ſo happy as to hear them preach, did yet rend the Church by a dreadful Schiſm, which ſoon after grew to that heighth, that the Weſtern Church excommunicated the Eaſtern, for differing from them in the obſervation of *Eaſter*.

The beſt way to deter Men from ſpending their time and zeal in the ſervice of Bigotry, either as its Chaplains, or as its Emiſſaries or Executioners, will be to conſider the great defects, under which it labours, and the ſad effects which it produceth.

The firſt pernicious effect of Bigotry, is, that it obtrudes on us things of no moment as matters of the greateſt importance. Now, as it would be a great defect in a Man's ſenſe to take a Star

Star for the Sun; or in an Oratour to inſiſt tenaciouſly on a point which deſerved no conſideration; ſo it muſt be a much greater errour in a Chriſtian to prefer, or even to equal a meer circumſtance to the ſolid points of Religion.

But theſe miſtakes become more dangerous, by inducing their Votaries to believe, that becauſe they are Orthodox in theſe matters, they are the only People of God, and all who joyn not are Aliens to the Commonwealth of *Iſrael:* And from this ſprings firſt, that they, as Friends of God, may be familiar with him, and, as Friends do one to another, may ſpeak to him without diſtance or premeditation; thence it is that we hear dreadful nonſenſe inſolently vented in extemporary Prayers, ſuch as would induce one to think that they do not believe him to be a God

to whom they ſhew ſo little reſpect; for who can think that Infinite Wiſdom can conſider them as Friends, who dare addreſs to him ſo unſuitably? Bigotry having thus corrupted our reaſoning in matters of Religion, it eaſily depraves it in the whole courſe of our Morals and Politicks.

The Bigots in the Second place proceed to fancy, that they who differ from them are Enemies to God, becauſe they differ from God's People; and then the Old Teſtament is conſulted for expreſſions denouncing Vengeance againſt them: All Murders become Sacrifices by the Example of *Phineas* and *Ehud*; all Rapines are hallowed by the *Iſraelites* borrowing the Ear-rings of the *Egyptians*; and Rebellions have an hundred forc'd Texts of Scripture brought to patroniſe them. But I oftentimes wonder where they find Precedents in the Old

Teſta-

Teſtament for Murdering and Robbing Mens Reputations, or for lying ſo impudently for what they think the good Old Cauſe; which God foreſeeing, has commanded us not to lie, even for his ſake.

The Third link of this Chain, is, That they fancying themſelves to be the only *Iſrael*, conclude that God ſees no ſin in them, all is allowable to them; and (as one of themſelves ſaid) *They will be as good to God another way.*

The Fourth is, That ſuch as differ from them are Baſtards, and not the true Sons of God, and therefore they ought to have no ſhare of this Earth, or its Government; hence flow theſe holy and uſeful Maxims, Dominion is founded in Grace, and the Saints have the only right to govern the Earth; which being once upon an occaſion earneſtly

preſs'd

preſs'd in *Cromwel's* little Parliament, it was anſwered by the Preſident of his Council, That the Saints deſerved all things, but that Publick Employment was ſuch a drudgery that it would be unjuſt to condemn the Saints to it, and that the ſecureſt way to make the Common-wealth happy, was to leave them in a pious retirement, interceding for the Nation at the Throne of Grace.

The Fifth Errour in their reaſoning, is, That ſeeing their opinions flow immediately from Heaven, no earthly Government can condemn any thing they do, in proſecution of theſe their Opinions; thence it is that they raiſe Seditions and Rebellions without any ſcruple of Conſcience, and believing themſelves the Darlings and Friends of God, they think themſelves above Kings, who are only

only their Servants and Executioners.

It may ſeem ſtrange, that ſuch Principles as Bigotry ſuggeſts ſhould be able to produce ſo ſtrange effects, and many fanciful perſons pretend it to be from God, becauſe it prevails ſo. But this wonder will be much leſſen'd if we conſider firſt, That the greateſt part of Mankind are weak or diſhoneſt, and both theſe ſupport Bigotry with all their might. Many virtuous Men alſo promote its Intereſt from a miſtaken good nature, and vain Men from a deſign of gaining Popularity. Theſe who are diſoblig'd by the Government joyn their Forces with it, to make to themſelves a Party; and thoſe who are naturally unquiet or factious, find in it a pleaſant divertiſement; whereas on the other ſide, few are ſo concern'd for Moderation and Truth as the

the Bigots are for their belov'd Conceits.

There is alſo a tinſel Devotion in it which dazles the Eyes of unthinking People; and this ariſes either from the new Zeal, that like Youth, is ſtill vigorous, and has not as yet ſpent it ſelf ſo as that it needs to languiſh; or elſe, from the Bigot's being conſcious that his Opinions need to be diſguis'd under this hypocritical Mask.

Severity alſo encreaſes the number and Zeal of Bigots. Humane Nature inclines us wiſely to that pity which we may one day need; and few pardon the Severity of a Magiſtrate, becauſe they know not where it may ſtop. I have known alſo ſome very ſerious Men, who have concluded, that ſince Magiſtrates have not oftentimes in other things a great concern for Devotion, their forwardneſs againſt theſe Errours

muſt

muſt ariſe either from the cruelty of their temper, or from ſome hid deſign of carrying on a particular Intereſt, very different from, and oft-times inconſiſtent with the Religious Zeal they pretend. And generally, the Vulgar believe that all Superiours are inclin'd to triumph over thoſe who are ſubjected to them; many have alſo a ſecret perſwaſion that the Magiſtrates are ſtill in League with the National Church, and its Hierarchy, which they ſuſpect to be ſupported by them, becauſe it maintains their Intereſt, and they are apt to conſider Churchmen but as Penſioners, and ſo as Partizans to the Civil Magiſtrate.

Many are drawn into the eſteem of ſuch Opinions as they ſee Men ſuffer difficulties for But this miſtake was foreſeen by the Primitive Church, who therefore declared that *non Pœna, ſed Cauſa*

Cauſa facit Martyrem. Chriſtian Prudence does not allow a Man to ſell his precious Life for an incompetent Price; Forwardneſs that way does not always recommend an Opinion: Men of all Perſwaſions have died with firmneſs; Pagans, yea, Women for their Country or Husbands have ſhewed a courage beyond any of theſe Bigots or Enthuſiaſts. The Hiſtory of *China* relates a notable Inſtance of fantaſtical Bigotry; an Hundred Thouſand *Chineſes*, who had born tamely their Nation's being enſlav'd by the *Tartars*, without making any Effort to recover their Liberty, choſe rather to dye than conform to the *Tartars*, in turning up their Muſtaches after their Mode; Vanity well diſguis'd can flatter Men with the Glory of Martyrdom; and its obſervable that this Firmneſs ſaints often where Executions are Private;

Private; however, this ſhould prevail with a Wiſe Magiſtrate, never to make Religious Opinions Criminal.

The true Cures then of this Diſeaſe ſeem to be, Firſt, to endeavour to plant Reaſon early and carefully in the Hearts of Young ones, or to recover it in thoſe of more advanced Years; for this is a more ſolid and effectual way, than the immediate oppoſing, or offering to cure this Imperfection it ſelf, will prove; Men love their old and familiar Acquaintance; Traveling abroad conduces much to this Cure; for ſuch as converſe only with thoſe of their own Perſwaſion, are daily warm'd into new degrees of Zeal; whereas, when we ſee that Men of true ſenſe differ from us, we will be inclin'd from a Chriſtian Modeſty and Humility, firſt to doubt our own Opinions, and then to hear Inſtructions:

ſtructions: The Orthodox Clergy ſhould by their Pious Lives conduce to this Cure; and even Laicks ſhould, by their ſerious and Devout Converſation, convince them that Sincerity and Piety are not inſeparable from ſuch humorous Conceits. Theſe poor deluded People ſhould conſider what Miſchiefs and Deſolations thoſe *Vulcanos* of Zeal have brought upon this Iſland by their dreadful Eruptions; there being but very few Families, in which ſome of their Children have not been ſacrificed to this *Moloch*: Nor can our Navies or Armies ſecure us while this Enemy lodgeth within us, and is cheriſhed by us. They ſhould alſo conſider, that Religious Reaſon left to it ſelf will at laſt overcome thoſe prejudices, which, like Meteors, may ſhine for a time, but will at laſt vaniſh into the common and undiſtinguiſh'd Air.

But

But the beſt of all Remedies, is, to conſider ſeriouſly the Doctrine and Practice of our Bleſſed Saviour (to form our Reaſon by which is the great deſign of this Eſſay) and therefore they ſhould remember, that our Saviour foreſeeing the inconſequentialneſs of their Actions, did obſerve, that they did ſtart at Straws, and ſwallow Camels; that they tithed the Mint and Anniſe, but forgot the great things of the Law. Our Saviour's reaſoning in the Parable of the Publican and Phariſee, ſhould humble all ſpiritual Pride; and his humble and ſubmiſſive Form of Prayer ſhould bridle the indiſcretion of all rude Addreſſers; He ſuffered the Sons of *Zebedee* to call for Fire from Heaven, that he might thereby inſtruct the World how unſuitable their Zeal was to his Goſpel; he reaſoned againſt fighting *Peter*, that if his King-

Kingdom were of this Earth, his Servants would fight for him; and if he needed any Aſſiſtance, he might call for Legions of Angels: Nor can I think, after this Inſtance, our Saviour would have truſted *Peter*, in his abſence, with two Swords, ſince he was ſo forward in his own preſence, when he had but one: But if others will be ſo blind as not to follow our Saviour's way of reaſoning, let us at leaſt follow it, in praying for them, becauſe they know not what they are doing; yet I wiſh both they and we would conſider, that we reſemble too much at this time the unhappy *Jews*, who, by fighting amongſt themſelves, for ſmall matters, relating to their Religious Rites, occaſioned their being totally deſtroyed, and extirpated by the *Romans* who beſieged them.

I know no greater enemy to juſt thoughts or Reaſoning than Raillery and Satyrs, and the new way of reaſoning by ridiculous Similies. Moſt Men are ſo famous for this kind of arguing, and do by it confute and battle ſo much all who oppoſe it, that it paſſes for the ſtronger way of Reaſoning, Victory being ſtill accounted the Effect as well as the Reward of ſtrength: But yet this way looks ſo ſillie to Men when they retire and are alone, that they begin to wonder what it was that pleas'd them ſo before they left the converſation. And therefore I think it worth my pains to ſearch a little into the cauſes of this vulgar errour, why Men are ſo much pleaſed with raillery, and why it prevails ſo in the World at this day.

The firſt cauſe of this, in my opinion, is, that Men naturally love Truth, as the Eyes do Light,

or

or Bruits Food; for Truth is indeed the Light and Food of the Soul; yet missing it, after much enquiry, and a passionate search, they do either conclude there is none, and so laugh at all others who seek it, or in revenge, contemn it as a Cheat; and this breeds at first Raillery and Satyrs; even as we see, that when Gallants are rebuked by a severe Mistress, they please or revenge themselves in railing at her, or treating her in ridicule. As States-men and Courtiers seldom fail, when thrown off, to use the Court and Employments from which they are fall'n, after the same manner. And since too few seek after Truth it self, naked and unrewarded; others again weary of the toils and severity required in true reasoning, rest on this, as the easiest; even as Men content themselves with gilded Plate, when they cannot

attain

attain to true Gold; and Raillery has become by this as ordinary as the falſe Jewels, with which ſo many now pleaſe themſelves, inſtead of true ones; and at a diſtance, and on the publick Theatre, even of buſineſs, the one appears briſker than the other.

Raillery pleaſes alſo mens Self-love better than Truth; for Truth is too ſevere to flatter our Vanity, and too honeſt to ſerve our Revenge; whereas Raillery does tempt the Jeſter to flatter himſelf, and is an ordinary occaſion for others to flatter him as a formidable Wit: Nor can the World find ſo fit a Tool for Revenge as Raillery; ſince few durſt even for fear of checks of Conſcience ſtab their Neighbour, or for Honour wound him when his back is turn'd, if it were not in a pleaſant jeſt, which makes Malice paſs for Wit, and cheats the Satyriſts into a belief that they

deſign not to wrong him, but to pleaſe the company: The Hearers alſo would hate ſuch Enemies to Mankind, if they were not ſo raviſh'd with the way, that they had not time to think on the Malice. This misfortune alſo attends it, that it tempts men to do or ſay many things on which they would not otherwiſe adventure; preſuming that their Wit, which is ſo much admir'd, will alſo fright or bribe others from accuſing or puniſhing them.

Truth is a ſober and equal Pleaſure, free from all tranſports and hateing them, and ſo ſeems dull and flat to young and warm Spirits; whereas that paſſion which accompanies Raillery, either in Joy or Revenge, is more vigorous and elevated; and it is indeed a wonder to think what force and energy there is in the Soul, when the Sails of its Imagination are filled with the proſperous gale of

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Applauſe, and by what ſecret ſprings the Fancy is able to raiſe it to ſuch heights when it is warmly pleas'd; or what infinite numbers of raviſhing Images appear to a ſtrong Fancy: And how it creates ſo many pleaſant notions out of other Mens Infirmities: And what great variety and newneſs it conſtantly produces, forming always various Scenes of Joy, to the wonder even of ſober men: I deny not, but ſome do from good Nature, and to pleaſe the Converſation, ſcoff and jeſt, and, as I ſaid formerly, ſome ſeeing it ſo much admir'd, think it is truly good, it being a kind of modeſty, to believe that good which pleaſes others; and ſome ſeeing Victory attend it, think it is the ſtrongeſt way of arguing; and, thus this Weed riſes and ſpreads, and we ſit with delight under the refreſhing ſhades; and with theſe raptures of Malice or Pleaſure,

Scoffers are ſo much taken, that they have not the leiſure to think on what they ought to do, or even on what they are doing; and thus they forget frequently the duty they owe to great men, to whom they have acceſs, and can hardly keep themſelves within that moderation in Converſation, Eating, Drinking, and other Exerciſes that are requiſite for preſerving Health and Quiet, or for obſerving the Rules of Decency and Diſcretion: I conclude, That Jeſting and Satyrs are ſo far from being a relaxation of Spirit to thoſe who are wearied with ſerious Employments, as is pretended, that they are oft-times rather a new and ſtudied toil, and moſt of theſe extravagancies could ſcarce be pardoned; like bitter and ſour Fruits which can hardlybe eaten, except when confected with great care and expence. But if we look further into

into the matter, we ſhall find that nothing wrongs more both Reaſon and Piety, and is more deſtructive to true Friendſhip, or more inconſiſtent with Sincerity.

For clearing whereof we may obſerve, that every Faculty of the Soul contributes in a peculiar way to our reaſoning: the Judgment does bring ſolid Arguments, the Memory Inſtances, Examples, and Citations, the Fancy or Imagination beautifies rather than illuminates its Objects with Similies, Metaphors, and other Rhetorical Figures; ſo that Raillery neglecting the other two, ſports it ſelf lightly amidſt thoſe Flowers, without minding the great buſineſs; and I have obſerved, that few who have been once bewitched with this way, ever minded any other. This ſuffers them not to penetrate further than the outſide of things, and ſo it is impoſſible, that they who uſe it as their con-

ſtant divertiſement, can have any deep thoughts, or can ſearch into the bottom of Affairs.

I have alſo obſerved, that Raillery ariſes oft-times from an undervaluing of all perſons and things, and nothing can be more contrary to Religion or Government than this is. To Religion, becauſe, when a Man contemns all that God has created, he undervalues what the Almighty himſelf was pleaſed with, and rejoyced in, and ſcorns thoſe great Exemplars of Piety and Devotion, whom God has called his Friends, and Men after his own heart; and ſo in effect he concludes, that God (bleſſed be his holy Name) made not good choice, and knew not how to value men a-right. And therefore I ſtand aſtoniſh'd to hear Ballads againſt *Moſes* and *David* ſo much admir'd by ſuch as confeſs there is a God, that the Scriptures are his Dictates, and

and they the Pen-men of theſe Scriptures, and ſo Secretaries to God: Nor do ſuch Scoffers make good States-men; for none are ſuch, ſave they who from a Principle of Conviction and Perſwaſion, manage publick Affairs to the advantage of thoſe who employ them: Whereas they who believe that nothing is worth their pains, can never do any thing with affection and vigour; and ſince they care not for the things themſelves, and ſcorn ſuch as employ them, they muſt never care for what Events attend them. Have we not ſeen ſome of theſe great Wits prove the worſt of all States-men in our own days? and as far below the meanneſs in management as they were above the wiſeſt in Wit and Sharpneſs. What Friends alſo theſe prove is ſufficiently underſtood to thoſe whom they have loſt for a Jeſt, after all the ſer-

vices they could have done them: And it is very obſervable, that if Three or Four of them be in a Room, they who remain after ſuch Converſations will fall on him who is gone with all the malice imaginable; and we very ſeldom ſee two ſuch Wits true Friends.

I ſhall end theſe Reflections with this Addition, that generally Satyrs are made up of Impiety, Malice or Baudery; the Firſt, unworthy of a Chriſtian; the Second, of a Gentleman; and the laſt, of a ſober Man; and in which Railers have Atheiſts for their Maſters, ſatyrical Waſps for their Comrades, and oft-times Fools and mad Men for their Superiours. Unhappy Men who do things that they muſt be aſham'd of, and whereof the pleaſure is leſſen'd in the preſent time by checks of Conſcience, and grows bitter afterwards by fear of Torments; a quality

quality our Saviour never countenanc'd, which his Favourites have ever zealouſly decry'd; in which Buffoons and Players have exceeded the greateſt Kings, the moſt Renowned Hero's, and the Wiſeſt men; a cowardly extravagancy which ever attacks the Weak, and a mercileſs humour which triumphs over the Unfortunate; upon which accounts all men make it their Intereſt to expoſe the Scoffer, as finding in his Ruine their own Self-defence; and becauſe they know he cannot be pleaſed except they be miſerable, therefore they conclude, that they cannot be ſecured till he be humbled.

I deſign not by this to leſſen the eſteem due to true Wit, and that pleaſantneſs in converſation which ariſes from it as Flowers do from the Root. The Almighty certainly deſign'd to make all men happy, and there is no happineſs

pineſs without pleaſure; and as he rejoyced, when he ſaw that all that he had made was good, ſo he was deſirous that Man might find out this good, both for making himſelf thereby happy, and for inviting him the more to magnify the Creator, and therefore to ſweeten the miſeries which naturally imbitter humane Life: God has illuminated ſome with a pleaſantneſs of humour, which rejoyces the Society into which they come, as the Sun illuminates the Room into which it enters; theſe are they who having peace of Conſcience at home, are thereby allowed to be glad; and who having Wit, employ it in turning the right ſide of things to them, underſtanding as well to find out what is pleaſant in any Object as Artiſts do to find a Mine of Gold in a barren Mountain. This is the true uſe of Wit; and if at any time they uſe it to treat

Vice

Vice or Extravagancy in ridicule, it is not from Malice to the Perſon, but from deſire to reform him, and Mankind by him. There is a juſtice in Scourging, Deſaming, and Baniſhing Vice; and this Juriſdiction is given by Heaven immediately to ſuch as have ſenſe; of whom, upon that account, the greateſt Rulers ſtand in awe; and ſo much reverence is due to them, that the reſt of Mankind beſtow applauſe according to their inclinations: Bitterneſs then, and ſullen Moroſeneſs in Wit is the tyranny of this Juriſdiction: If it be inſolent, it is but the wrong ſide of this delicate Picture, a flaſhing Light, which at firſt dazles, but thereafter blinds; a delicious Fruit corrupted into bitterneſs, and a beautiful Face wrinkled by fretting humours.

The Ancients term'd Wit a Salt; and that is not fit for Food, but for Seaſoning; it may be us'd plentiful ly

fully in Converſation, moderately in Buſineſs, but never in Religion.

They who enter into a Faction do not properly reaſon weakly: but deſert Reaſon altogether, as one does who leaves his own to go into another Country, whereof the Laws Cuſtoms and Language are different. The deſign and center of Faction is to drive on ſuch a Project, and adhere to thoſe who proſecute it. And therefore nothing muſt be allow'd or argu'd but with reſpect to theſe. Hence it is that in vain you reaſon with them; for one may tranſubſtantiate as ſoon as convert them, all that their Friends ſay is unanſwerable, and they contemn and ſcorn what is ſaid by their Adverſaries when they cannot anſwer it; there is no crime they dare not commit, for the Guilt ſeems but ſmall when divided amongſt ſo many bearers, they warm themſelves by clubbing into a kind of belief, and they vote themſelves into a ſhadow

of

of Infallibility; whilſt they cry out againſt others as Slaves to the Government, they become really Slaves to the Faction, their Liveries and Chains being ſeen by all, except themſelves; but the great Salary with which their Bondage is to be rewarded, is Applauſe from their Friends, or it may be the Mob, to whom naturally their Appeal lies, and the getting into the Government, where they will be abhorred for practiſing every thing they formerly decry'd, & ſo have that reputation for which they toil'd, blaſted by their own old Arguments; this extravagancy is in it ſelf ſo unacceptable to all devout and reaſonable men, that it is forc'd to uſe Railery to baffle Religion by Bigotry, and Reaſon by Railery; and I believe that Faction was the firſt introducer of the one into the Church, and of the other into the State.

My chiefeſt wiſh then ſhall be, that God who has ennobled me with

with right Reaſon, may make me happy in the right uſe of it; that I may neither ſell it for Money, nor barter it for Fame; and that it may never be dazled by the ſhining brightneſs of Favour, nor clouded by the black ſhadows of Fear; and tho' the portion beſtowed upon me be very ſmall, that yet I may employ that one precious Talent ſo, as that I may have from my Glorious Maſter that only deſireable Character, *Well done, good and faithful ſervant, thou haſt been faithful in a few things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*, Matth. 25. 23.

FINIS.